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THE Liguorian

A MONTHLY MAGAZINE FOR LOVERS OF GOOD READING



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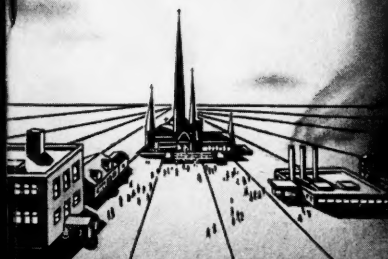
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Amongst Ourselves

The suggestion that subscribers to THE LIGUORIAN make it a gift to some of their relatives, friends or associates at Christmas is one that we believe to be singularly appropriate for the season. This is because THE LIGUORIAN is so largely, nay exclusively, concerned with Christ, whose name, historical reality and present abiding in the world are the only reason for Christmas. Just as, in the matter of Christmas cards, true believers in Christ find it simply unthinkable that they should send out cards that have no reference to Christ in their drawings and legends, so we feel strongly that gifts should in some way bring the blessings, the teachings, the spirit of Christ to those who receive them. Secular magazines will certainly not do this, because they either ignore Christ or speak of Him as if nobody can be quite sure that He actually existed or who or what He was. We know, and we publish a magazine to prove and explain, that nobody can find happiness without Him.

As old readers know, the December issue of THE LIGUORIAN is always a Christmas issue. It is filled with material that is designed to turn the minds of its readers to Christ, whether for the first time or by

way of reminders for those who already know Him. In early December it is mailed with a greeting card from the donor, to all for whom gifts of a year's subscription are sent to us, so that it may help them enter into the very heart of the joys of Christmas. And then throughout the year they receive a new issue each month, by which their knowledge of Christ and His promises is filled out, and their submission to His will is encouraged and assisted.

This year, besides suggesting here and on our back cover that readers send THE LIGUORIAN as a Christmas gift to others, we shall send a Christmas gift form to each present subscriber to make it easy. Last year, when several thousand gift subscriptions were given for Christmas, many readers asked for such forms so that they would not have to mutilate their copies of THE LIGUORIAN to send in their gifts. No reader need feel under any obligation or pressure to use these forms; they are not in any sense a begging appeal. They are a convenience for those who want to express their Christmas wishes to others in the most appropriate way, by sending them something that will help them to live safely and happily forever in Christ.

Please notify us promptly of your change of address, giving both your old and new address. It makes it easy for our office if you cut your stenciled address from the rear cover of one of your issues of The Liguorian and send it in when asking for a change of address. Notify us by the tenth of the month if your copy for that month has not been delivered.

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THE

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November, 1953

a magazine for the lovers of good reading



Devoted to the Unchangeable Principles of Truth, Justice, Democracy and Religion, and to All That Brings Happiness to Human Beings

How Death Leads to Life

Death is a teacher. Death is a motive. Death is an opportunity. See how much it can do for you if you face it humbly and bravely.

Donald F. Miller

IF YOU are a normal human being, the most impressive fact concerning your life is the certainty of your death. This fact is brought home to you every time someone close to you, by reason of love or association, is removed from the land of the living by death. It grows more fixedly into your consciousness as the years of your life are checked off one by one, each seeming to have passed more rapidly than the one before, each making you aware of some new weakness of your body such as might be, or one day will be, the cause of your death.

There are two ways of looking upon this fact of your death. One way is to try to forget it; to concentrate on living as fully and enjoyably as you can each day, almost as if there were no such thing as death, or as if you were convinced that you will be an exception to the general rule and will not die. The other way is to look at death frequently, humbly, intelligently, trying to learn from it whatever it may teach that is of value for your daily living.

The Catholic Church, inspired by the wisdom of Christ, urges you to choose the second way of looking upon

death. Besides incorporating many reminders of it and lessons to be drawn from it in her year-round activities, she sets aside a month for special considerations of death. It is the month of November, when nature, with its barren trees, withered grass, lifeless soil and freezing winds, presents a dramatic picture of death to all who can see.

During this month of death, the Church urges you to draw from the thought of death lessons of life, of lasting life, for yourself, to think about your beloved dead and to do something for them. Under her wise guidance, then, death becomes a teacher, a motive and an opportunity. Under each of these heads it loses much of its fearfulness; indeed, it becomes a means of life, it leads to life, the kind of life in which there will be no mourning or grieving, no death or sorrow or parting any more.

I. Death is a Teacher

Anything is a teacher that starts a train of thought and raises questions in your mind that lead you to seek and find important truths by which you must live. In this sense death is a powerful teacher; the thought of it leaves you no rest until you have grasped all

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the truths that throw light on its meaning and make it no longer a prod to despair.

You cannot think of death without asking why it must be, when everything within you is made to yearn for life and to resist death. And you cannot cast about for an answer to your "Why?" without learning that there is only one answer, and that no other will ever satisfy your mind. The answer that presents itself out of the very harshness and seeming cruelty of death is that it is a penalty, equally shared by all members of the human race, for some evil into which the human race has fallen.

Here your reason, which tells you unmistakably that there is the element of penalty in death, gropes outward to find confirmation of its conviction in some sign from God, and to seek further explanation that makes it not a penalty synonymous with despair. And you find God has given you not only a sign; He has spoken clearly, He has revealed the truth to you.

On the one hand He has confirmed your conviction that death is a penalty by pointing to the first or original sin of your human family as its historical cause, and to all the other sins, down to the last one committed by yourself, that have been occasioned by the weakness inherited from that original fall.

On the other hand, He has sent His Son into the world as your Redeemer, the one who made it possible for you, despite your certain bodily death, to possess a new life, even a divine life, forever. Your Redeemer made that possible by accepting the major part of the penalty of your family's sins and your own actual sins in His terrible death. He offered you the divine fruits of His death through His Church, His Mass and His sacraments. He taught

you in many sermons, instructions, precepts and commands, how to live in conformity with the new life He won for you by His death.

If the thought of your death does not inspire you to look for and find this explanation of its meaning, you are the most miserable creature in the world. In that case you have to keep saying to yourself every time you come face to face with the death of a friend or with the thought of your own death, that life is a mockery, a jest, a cruel burden, a worthless gift. In that case you must creep into the ranks of the cynics and the embittered, who say there is no God, there is no justice, there is no sense or reason in human life. In that case you will find your mind tortured and tormented by the cruel facts that children die of strange diseases, thousands of the young, middle-aged and old die every year from cancer, millions die in useless wars, and you yourself are hastening toward death even now by every breath you draw.

If you won't accept your instinctive recognition of the truth that death is a penalty, and God's explanation of what the penalty is for, nobody, not the greatest scientist or philosopher in the world, will ever be able to take the mystery out of death for you. And if you won't accept your redemption from the worst penalties of sin through the death of Jesus Christ, you may just as well make ready now for black despair. Nothing can save you from it — not all the frenetic grasping for a few hours or years of pleasure that you may be tempted to settle for if you will not accept eternal life from Jesus Christ. You may put it off for a while by activity, but you will catch up with despair certainly some day.

Moreover it is only this true explanation of death that furnishes you with

any solid reason for loving other human things, for doing good to them, for respecting their rights. They have a claim on you only because they share both the penalty of death with you and the redemption from everlasting death merited for all by the death of Christ.

If you won't believe that, despite death, men are immortal, that they are destined for heaven or hell, that they are given life only to prepare for death as a beginning of heaven or hell, don't talk about the sweetness of brotherly love or the glory of democracy or the necessity of respecting the rights of others. If you decide that death is the mysterious end and annihilation of man, be logical: take everything you can out of your few years of life even at the expense of others: kill, rape, lie, cheat, steal — there is nothing to stop you if death is the end of everything. Be a Hitler if you get the chance, or a Stalin, or a gangster. The life and freedom and property of others are the cheapest things you can expend for your own momentary happiness if you believe that death is the end of all.

But if you accept God's explanation of death, then only will you know why you must respect and love and help your neighbor. You will know that you dare not tamper with the bodies or souls of other human beings because they belong to God. You will know that at your death absolute justice and sweet mercy will be meted out to you by God according as you have meted them out to others. All this you will be taught by death if you permit your reason to reach out for and accept the explanation of it from God.

II. Death is a Motive

What you are taught does not always become a motive for what you do. It can be held in a kind of academic way, as a truth that has little

bearing on your actions, as many a man knows the truth that Christ was God, but in no way acts upon what he knows. Or the truth may be forgotten in moments of stress and temptation when it is needed most.

Death is a motive in the sense that it can and must bring the truths it teaches to influence your conduct every day. If it does not, you will be no better off than the man who has refused to look for or learn any part of the truth about death.

The thought of death and its meaning is especially a motive that must be brought to bear on decisions and choices that involve an opportunity for sin. You know the truth that your soul is not going to die when your body does. It will go right on living, with a more acute consciousness, and greater capacity for happiness or pain, than it ever possessed before the death of your body.

But there is a more terrific form of death that can befall your soul than that which can assail your body. It is the death of serious sin, of disobedience to the commands of the Redeemer Who won for you a second chance of life and everlasting happiness. This is sometimes called the death of your soul, but only by a figure of speech. It is not a death of unconsciousness, like the death of your body. It is a death of perfectly conscious unhappiness that can last forever. If this death of your soul called sin comes together with death of your body, it will be the beginning of everlasting pain.

There are two things that make the thought of death a powerful motive for resisting sin. The first is its uncertainty as to time and place and manner. You never know but that it may be just after you have committed a deliberate serious sin when you may be thrust into death. It is estimated

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that three out of five deaths are sudden deaths. If you train yourself to remember that you are more apt to die suddenly than with time for repentance and preparation, you will never permit yourself to take a chance on serious sin.

The other thing to be considered is an even more powerful motivating force in your life. It is the fact that you are always dependent on God's grace to repent sincerely of your deliberate sins before death. The possibility of a quick and sudden death right after a serious sin is not the only danger to be feared. Much more to be feared is the possibility that one sin can so easily lead to another and another or a hundred or a thousand, and the combination of all these sins can make the grace of repentance impossible, except by miracle, before death. That is why the unprovided death after a long life of unrepented sins, is as much to be feared as a sudden death after one sin.

It is the thought of death, therefore, that makes it unthinkable for a Catholic to enter into a bad marriage. This means entering freely into a state of continuous and frequently repeated serious sins, so that death has to be feared every day and night and every hour of each day as the beginning of everlasting punishment.

It is the thought of death that gives courage to the wills of young people in love, who, though they may be tempted to sin, will find their resistance to sin stiffened by the fact that they must fear not only their own death in sin, but that of the one whom they profess to love.

It is the thought of death that makes it easy for husbands and wives to avoid the all too common sins of infidelity and contraception, because it keeps them mindful that life, with all

the burdens created by loyalty to Christ, is short and swift, and at death eternity begins.

It is the thought of death that can motivate anyone who has sinned to seek forgiveness at once, to let no day pass without going to confession and being forgiven by God, lest His call to an accounting come before the sin has been taken away, or lest, before the grace of repentance is seized upon, the repetition of the same sins may place it beyond reach.

III. *Death is an Opportunity*

If you have learned and accepted the truth about death, and if you use the thought of it as a motive for living in loyalty to Christ and in loving God, then you will inevitably find it a marvelous opportunity for charity to others. Since death is the most important event that ever happens to anybody, you will find in its frequent occurrence around you a wide variety of occasions for practicing such charity. Some of them are the following.

1. *Death calls forth the charity of the living toward the dying.* If you understand death, you don't want to die unprepared. By the same token, you do not want anybody else to die unprepared. And you will be on the alert to use every possible means to assist the dying.

One of your favorite prayers will be that God's grace will be extended, even at the last moment, to those who are about to die without it. An indulgenced form of this prayer is: "Heart of Jesus once in agony, have pity on the dying."

You will not be deterred by human respect or any other unworthy motive from helping even dying strangers, whom you may chance upon in accidents, to make acts of perfect sorrow for their sins, trust in the merits of Christ, love of God and desire for

baptism, as the need may be.

Above all, you must be ready to do everything possible for members of your family and close friends when they are sick and dying. You will call the priest to minister to them in good time; you will encourage and help them with their prayers; you will pray at their bedside even when consciousness has gone, that God will remain with them to the end.

2. *Death inspires sweet and effective charity toward the bereaved.* Those who love someone greatly and lose that person by death, are inclined in the first moments of their bereavement to forget the truth about death and the lessons it is meant to teach.

It is then that your charity as a friend keeps reminding them of the truth, and, if they themselves have not been living so as to be prepared for a good death, gently suggests that they take the lesson of another's death to their own hearts.

Indeed, you alone, if you are a true Christian, will have anything of value to say to the bereaved who mourn the passing of one whom they loved. You alone can speak with conviction of the glorious exchange the dead person has made of this life for a better one. You alone can speak the comforting words that promise a reunion of the grieving living with the departed dead. You alone can encourage, as your love will inspire, the bereaved to act on the reminder given by death that the only thing that truly matters for anybody is that he die well prepared.

3. *Death presents occasions for true acts of charity toward the dead.*

Within the explanation of death that God has given through His Son and that He keeps before your mind through the Church He founded and guides, two truths are contained that inspire your active charity toward the

dead.

The first is the truth that at death the power of meriting stops for a soul. This means that it is no longer possible for one who has died to pay any debt that he owes to God except through suffering. If he died in mortal sin his debt will be paid forever in hell. If he died in venial sin, or without having made full atonement for sins that were forgiven, he must pay the debt in a place called purgatory. Only those who completely turned from God by mortal sin are condemned to hell. But those who die with slight defects or a small debt still owed cannot enter heaven till "the last farthing of the debt is paid."

The second is the truth that the living can help to pay the small debts still owed by the souls of the dead. The living still have the power of meriting; they can still draw on the infinite merits of Christ; they can, through the perseverance of their love, apply their merits to the relief of those who cannot merit for themselves any more.

You can practice the charity inspired by these two truths in two ways. First, by taking part in the wake and the funeral of one who has died and making these occasions for prayer and sacrifice in their behalf. At the wake you kneel beside the body and join in reciting the rosary and other prayers for the one who has been taken away. At the funeral you unite with others in offering the holy sacrifice of the Mass for his soul, saying over and over again in the consoling words of the liturgy, "Eternal rest grant unto him, O Lord, and let perpetual light shine upon him."

Secondly, you practice charity to the dead by remembering them long after the funeral. You do so by offering up the loneliness of separation and the pangs of grief to atone for their

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sins. You do so by repeated prayers in their behalf, and by offering up the sacrifice of the Mass and the reception of Holy Communion again and again for their souls. And this charity is not confined to your own beloved dead, but embraces all who are detained in purgatory waiting for the vision of God, especially those who are most forgotten and abandoned by those who remain in this world.

Thus does death lead to life. It leads to the life that can be found only in

the teachings of Christ, who took the mystery out of death and made it an occasion for thinking of the eternal life He merited for all. It leads to life because it constitutes a most powerful motive for avoiding the everlasting death that is caused by sin. And it leads to life because it inspires the wondrous charity that releases others from bondage and suffering, and speeds their entry into the glorious vision and life everlasting with God that is the final goal of every human being created and redeemed by God.

Nation Without Nuns

Suppose for just a moment that when you arise tomorrow morning the work of the nuns throughout this nation will suddenly have been suspended, what will happen? This will happen, according to statistics compiled by Vincent P. McCorey, S.J.

Fifty-four thousand young women will be turned out of one hundred and twenty-three colleges. Half a million boys and girls will go sadly and perilously to public high schools. Nine hundred thousand public school pupils will look in vain for religious instruction. Over two million parochial and grade school youngsters will be teacherless. Forty-five thousand wayward or underprivileged children will return to the streets to plague society and ruin themselves.

Twenty-two thousand aged men and women will be homeless and helpless. Thirty-four thousand student nurses will have to become nurses without the training which only the Divine Physician can give. Within the next year, almost four million patients will crowd secular hospitals instead of finding place in eight hundred Catholic hospitals.

Revelation

Speaking on Christian marriage at Merthyr Tydfil, Father Vann, O.P., told of a little Cockney who went to a priest in great distress and told him that he would like to get married, but that he couldn't decide between two young ladies whom he liked very much. One of the girls was named Maria. The priest talked to him and finally told him to go into the church and pray about it. Five minutes later the rectory doorbell rang furiously, and the little man, breathless with excitement, said: "Blimey, Father, it's a miracle."

"Why, what's the matter?" said the priest.

"Well," said the Cockney, "I thought I'd say a prayer in front of the statue of Our Lady of Lourdes, and so I goes up to the altar, and there on the blue cloth in letters of gold, it says: 'Ave Maria!'"

"I Hate to Go to Confession"

Apart from the fact that everybody, even saints, naturally dislike the humiliation of going to confession, some persons suffer unnecessarily at the time of confession because of their wrong ideas. This may help them.

Michael H. Pathe

A CONVERT to the Catholic faith told me this story about herself. The priest who instructed her advised her to tell her confessor, each time she went to confession, at least until she became familiar with the requirements, that she was a convert. This, he assured her, would allay any fears she might have concerning the telling of her sins, and would inspire the priest to give her special help.

Shortly after her first confession and Communion, a mission was held in her parish, and she decided to go to confession to the missionary. In fear and trembling she waited for her turn to enter the confessional. When the slide opened, she began, in true Catholic fashion, "Bless me, Father, for I have sinned." Then, in her excitement, she blurted out, "Father, I'm a convict." From then on her mind became a blank. Her nerve failed her, and she could not recall afterward what else she said to the priest, or what he said to her. Ever after that it became an acute agony for her to go to confession.

Even without such a blunder many converts suffer bitterly in going to confession. No doubt part of this suffering is due to half-remembered but horrible things against confession they have heard from non-Catholics before they ever thought of becoming Catholics. But there are also wrong notions about confession, that may take possession of the minds of life-long Catholics as well as converts, which make going to confession a great trial. It is most of-

ten these wrong notions that make people say: "I hate to go to confession." The more common ones are the following:

1. *"I'm never sure whether I am telling my sins properly or not."*

Dear friend, you have no cause for worry on that score. So long as you prepare yourself reasonably by prayer and a sincere examination of your conscience, and so long as you have the desire to do what is pleasing to God, you cannot make a mistake. God is not a tyrant. He is not unreasonable. If, through no fault of your own, you make a mistake in the manner of telling your sins or even by forgetting a sin, God will surely forgive you.

2. *"When my confession is over I never feel happy about it. I have no sense of relief. I never experience the satisfaction for which I long, and which others talk about."*

It may help you to know that this can sometimes be said by many who have been Catholics all their lives. Now listen carefully to what I am going to tell you. You do not receive any sacrament in order to feel satisfaction. You receive the sacraments in order to please God. And as long as God is pleased by what you do, nothing else matters.

In the entire scheme of the spiritual life this is fundamental. You go to Mass to honor God. You receive Holy Communion in order to show your love for God and to please Him. The primary purpose of all your prayers is

to acknowledge God's infinite power and your dependence on Him. Nothing else is important. Therefore you go to confession primarily to appease God for the rebellion of your will against His law. Whether you feel satisfied in so doing or not is of little moment. You must be guided by your faith and not by your feelings. Your faith tells you that God is satisfied with your good will, your honest effort, your repentance and obedience.

God does permit some souls to feel a great sense of satisfaction when they go to confession or receive Holy Communion, and He will inevitably permit all persons of good will to feel such satisfaction at some times. But He does not have to. If you are doing everything you can to make good confessions, and God denies you feelings of great satisfaction, it is probably because He thinks you are strong enough in your faith not to need them. Sweet milk is given to babies. Stronger food is the nourishment of adults.

3. *"The confession of my sins is such a humiliation to me."*

Of course. That is why it is called "the sacrament of penance." And you know, penance is never a picnic. We all have to do penance for our sins. It is by penance that we make atonement to God for our violations of His law. Fines and imprisonment are the penances that the state imposes on those who break its commandments. The self-humiliation of admission of guilt is the chief penance God requires of those who have offended Him.

However, you are inclined to exaggerate the humiliation of confession. God, after all, is very considerate of sinners. The penance involved in confessing your sins to a priest is really a very easy one. Your good name is safeguarded by the darkness, the secrecy, the anonymity of the confession-

al, and by the seal under which the priest has bound himself to reveal nothing you tell him under pain even of death.

Your obligation is merely to tell what sins you have committed. It is neither necessary nor advisable, rather it is forbidden, for you to go into unnecessary details or descriptions of your sins. If there are any important circumstances that ought to be mentioned, the priest will discover them by brief and prudent questioning. And you can always console yourself with the thought that the penance of humbly confessing your sins to an unknown priest is infinitely easier than the eternal punishment of hell, or the pains of purgatory.

4. *"The priest will have a terrible opinion of me."*

Nonsense. May I tell you my reaction when a poor sinner kneels before me? I feel that God must have a special love for this soul. Otherwise He would not have lavished upon it the extraordinary grace it needed to acknowledge such human frailty. And if God is so good to this creature, how could I dare be otherwise? I would be afraid of God's anger against me if I were to say one word that might prevent the return of a soul to Him.

Anyway, you should not be concerned with what the priest may think of you. Your real purpose in going to confession is to please God. God will have a good opinion of you, nay, He will love you. That is all that counts.

5. *"The sins of my past life, which I have already confessed, torment me every time I go to confession."*

I know, and you always want to tell them over again. Will you be displeased with me if I scold you for your sad lack of confidence in God? I'll wager that many a priest has scolded you for your unnecessary worry, but

you paid no heed to him. God's words apply perfectly to you. "Why are you fearful, O you of little faith?" Faith tells you that in the sacrament of penance all your sins are forgiven, provided you tell them honestly and are really sorry for them. You are sure you told them. You know you were deeply sorry for them. What, then, is the cause of your worry? Could it be that you are accusing God of failing to keep His promise? Did not God say to you, "Though your sins be as red as scarlet, I will wash them as white as snow?"

If you love God as you say you do, then have confidence in Him. Where there is lack of confidence there is something wrong with love. The mere fact that your former sins keep rising to your mind means nothing more than that you have permitted yourself to become unnecessarily nervous over them. Now, take my advice, and conduct a little private funeral of your own. First put all your past sins in a box. Then put the box in a deep hole in the ground. Cover it up, and don't mark the grave, so that you may never be able to find it again.

You may adopt the practice of including all the sins of your life in each confession you make, naming, if you will, one or the other commandment that you especially broke. But I forbid you, because of your worry, ever to mention any of them more specifically than that. Remember, too, that when a confessor forbids you to rake up the past he is taking on himself the full responsibility for that counsel, and relieving you of all need for worry. Your only duty is to obey the man who takes God's place in regard to your soul. Did you come to confession in order to please God? Then don't ever forget that He loves an obedient child.

6. *"I'm haunted by the fear that the*

priest may not understand me."

I would call that a left-handed compliment. You may have a very exalted idea of the sanctity of the priesthood, but I'm afraid you don't credit the priest with a sufficient quantity of brains. For a long time before a young man is ordained he is thoroughly trained in all the principles of theology and philosophy. Under the guidance of competent teachers he studies the law of God and is made well acquainted with all the strange vagaries of the human will. For his work in the confessional, "he knows all the answers" by the time he enters upon his ministry. And after some years of labor in the confessional, he may be counted on to understand even your difficult problem, and to know what is the proper remedy for your worries.

7. *"I like to say my prayers in my own language. The priest doesn't speak that language. That is why I hate to go to confession."*

Your prayers are to God, and He understands all languages. In telling your sins to the priest, you do not need to be very fluent in the language you use. Remember, there is only one thing you have to make known to the priest. That is your sins. Don't worry if you have an accent, or if your English is broken, or if you are not sure whether you are using the right words. The priest knows all the words, scientific and popular, for the various sins you might commit. Don't ever stay away from confession because you cannot speak the language of the priest with fluency.

Now, lay aside all your fears concerning confession. Think of this sacrament as a most wonderful proof of God's mercy toward you. No matter what sins you have committed, you come like a little child to the God who

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loves you with an infinite love, to the Good Shepherd Who has been searching for you, to the Father Who has been waiting for the prodigal's return. Do not be afraid of Him anymore. Be humble, and do the best you can.

Then leave everything else to Him. He cannot fail you because He is God. And when your confession is over, and you walk out of the confessional, leave all your worries there — forever.

Treasure From A Dump

Nathaniel Hawthorne once called the beautiful scents and sweet odors of this world a "stench in the nostrils" to one whose senses were drenched in the fragrance emanating from the crushed flowers of self-sacrifice in service to humanity.

In a suburb of Paris the city of priceless perfumes, a French priest has gathered around him a band of tramps and former convicts who labor with him all day at the unsavory job of sorting garbage.

The priest, Abbe Pierre Groues, and his helpers live in huts and tents near the garbage dump which is surrounded by a camp of families whose only resources come from the salvaged scrap iron, tin and other salable material found among the refuse.

Proceeds from the sale of salvaged materials not only pays for the upkeep of the group, now 160 strong, but has created a fund to provide some of the homeless families with shelter. The garbage-sorters themselves get free food and lodging and a little pocket money.

Father Pierre has the support of the Seine and Marne Department authorities who realize that he is not only salvaging waste material but immortal souls as well, and protests to have the dump and its inhabitants removed go unheeded.

The project, as Father Pierre would say: "Smells to high heaven and God's blessing is on it!"

How To Win Ball Games

Thomas Richardson, president of the Eastern League, tells a story about the Sunday morning he went to St. Patrick's Cathedral with Joe McCarthy, then manager of the Yankees, for devotions.

The Yankees were tied for the League lead in September and the Red Sox were in town. As the pair sat in their pew, they saw a big fellow walk into the church, go immediately to the nave and light three candles. McCarthy recognized him as Joe Cronin, manager of the Red Sox, and nudged Richardson.

"See that Cronin lighting three candles? Well, you go down and light four candles for me."

Says Richardson:

"I did, and believe it or not, the Yankees won that day, and the score was 4 to 3."

Detour for Death

Weddings and funerals are often held close together, thus showing how life and death are intimately related. Here is a case in which one had to be exchanged for the other.

Ernest F. Miller

IT IS UNLIKELY that the poor souls in purgatory are deprived of their sense of humor because they are doing time in prison. But probably there is a mournfulness mixed up in their appreciation of the incongruous. And very likely their laughter is muted, and their whoops of delight at the recognition of a joke are interpolated with cries of pain of varying volume and intensity as their keepers jab and poke at them in an effort to cut away the unremitted venial sins that they were careless enough to carry into eternity with them when they said farewell to earth.

If it be true that they have not lost their sense of humor, they should enjoy (insofar as enjoyment is possible in their place of punishment and pain) the story of Mr. Henry Hook who had the strange experience of attending the dead in a cemetery instead of attending the living at a wedding ceremony in a church.

Henry Hook's best friend was getting married. By rights Henry should have been asked to be best man. The only thing that stopped it was the fact that this friend of his had eight grown brothers. Blood is thicker than water. So, Henry had to settle for the next best position of importance, which naturally was that of usher.

Man proposes and God disposes. Henry had the best intention in the world of arriving at the church in good time. He even started out a little bit ahead of time to allow for the possible

emergency of a flat tire or a stalled engine. What he did not allow for was the immensity and intricacy of the traffic through which he had to travel in order to get to the church (over on the other side of town), and the superabundance of stop and go lights that barred his way from beginning to end. The lights were so arranged as to force all vehicles to come to a halt at every second block. They could not be beaten. Speeding up or slowing down all came to the same thing — a complete stop and a tedious delay. When the green lights finally did flash, Henry's car was engulfed in a sea of huge trucks that filled the street and took at least a block to reach a pace beyond five miles an hour, by which time another red light was reached. Hooting the horn did not help. Nor was a talent for maneuvering around obstacles of any use. The street was too narrow.

Patience is a virtue. And Henry was a man of virtue. But all things mortal have an end. Sometimes that includes the practice of virtue. Henry's virtue of patience was fast coming to an end. This simply could not go on. The wedding would be over before he even arrived at the front door. He fidgeted in his seat. He itched to throw all caution to the wind and undertake a program of weaving that would free him from the snails and turtles that blocked his progress.

And then, what should begin to swing past him but a funeral. He had

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no idea whose funeral it was. But he did notice (something that he had never adverted to before) that the procession paid no attention to red lights, stop signs or prohibitions against left turns. Serenely it went its way, the driver in the lead car ahead of the hearse watching for impediments and then skirting about them gracefully and with dignity while all the cars behind followed closely like a tail behind a kite.

This was allowed by the law, Henry surmised, to show honor to that which had been the temple of the Holy Ghost and which now was being escorted to its final resting place upon and within the earth. It was only right that it should be done. It was like the venerating of a relic. He said a prayer for the repose of the soul of the man or the woman whose body was the center of all this solemnity — black cars, flowers, prayers and even a halting of the law — and began to muse on the finality of death.

Yes, death was final for the body, at least as far as life on earth was concerned. But it was by no means final for the soul. Perhaps at this very moment he (or she) was suffering in purgatory. He said another prayer, and at that instant the last few cars of the procession swung by. What was more natural but that he should shift gears and fall in line. He would take part in the obsequies to a certain extent. He would follow along as though he were a part of the mourners, thereby killing two birds with one stone. First, he would be performing a corporal work of mercy, that of burying the dead; secondly, he would be expediting his journey through the clogged traffic to the church of the wedding.

No qualms bothered him as he made this decision. In one sense a wedding was as important as a funeral. Why

should not he as an usher at a wedding participate in the privilege of a mourner at a funeral? Why should not he be allowed to break through a few red lights and stop signs as long as he was careful to watch out for approaching cars and to do nothing that would endanger life or property?

The scheme worked beautifully. As the tail of the procession he went through three red lights, calmly passed by a stream of waiting cars and brought a taxi cab to a screeching halt that had a cross-street green light in its favor. In a few minutes he would be done with the congested area; thereafter he could detach himself from the funeral and be about his business. He whistled softly to himself. The bride and groom were surely worried about him. But they would not have to worry much longer. He would be right on the dot.

His whistling was premature. He had not figured on the police. At the very last red light through which the procession had to pass, a policeman sat on a motorcycle. Even from a distance Henry could see that this was a man of strength and great integrity, a man who was not only a symbol of the law but an upholder of the law as well. There were no lines of weakness or of compromise in his face. Whatever lines were discernible were lines of granite like those in the Rushmore monument. He sat immovable and unmoving on his cycle, dark glasses over his eyes, a pistol at his belt. Uneasiness came down on Henry like a cloud of thick humidity.

But he could not ease away from the procession now. The officer had spotted him. Nor was there a possibility of pulling over to the nearest curb to create the impression that he was on his way to shop. There were no stores along the street they now were

traveling. The best procedure was to move along nonchalantly and sedately with no expression on his face but that of grief.

In truth he did feel grief. He sympathized with the bereaved relatives of the deceased. If there were anything in his power to do to relieve their sorrow, he would have gladly done it. At the moment, however, it was imperative that he get past the policeman without arousing too much suspicion. No officer could in conscience look kindly upon a sympathy that came from so far a distance.

Now he was alongside the motorcycle. Now he was past it. He was going to make it. At least he thought he was going to make it. But he was mistaken. He heard a motor start. In a moment the officer was beside him, rolling along softly, measuring his speed with that of the accompanying car. For the space of three minutes he did not speak. Just when Henry thought that there was no significance in the proximity of the officer, the man spoke.

"Where is the funeral flag that your car is supposed to be flying?" he asked.

"The funeral flag?" repeated Henry. "Isn't it there?" He looked surprised. Every car in front of him had a blue flag appended to the front fender. His car was the only one without any kind of a flag at all. He stood out in the procession like a boil on a neck. No wonder that he had caught the attention of this man of sharp eye and iron will.

"No, it isn't there," answered the officer. "And it should be there. How can we tell who belongs to a funeral and who doesn't if some of the cars carry flags and others don't? All kinds of people could fall in line merely to get through heavy traffic." Henry winced interiorly. There was a rasp in

the officer's voice that boded no good. "For example," the man on the motorcycle went on, "what do I know about you? Maybe you're a bank-robber or a purse-snatcher, using this funeral procession as a means of escape." He looked at Henry as sharply as the maintenance of his equilibrium on the motorcycle would allow.

"You're right, sir, absolutely right," said Henry fervently. "We should be more careful in these things. They're only small things, it is true; but they're important. I see your point and I agree with you one hundred percent. As for my being a bank robber or a purse snatcher, well," he laughed easily and sadly, in keeping with his part in the funeral procession, "generally criminals don't go around dressed in dark clothes like the ones I'm wearing." Luckily he was wearing a dark suit because of the ushering duties he was about to assume. "But if you think I ought to have a flag, I'll drive up to the undertaker who is undoubtedly in the lead car and have him give me one."

"No, no," responded the policeman. "It isn't that we want to cause people trouble when they're mourning their dead. But we have to be careful. You continue on. I'll keep close behind you to see to it that you're not bothered by any of the other police along the way. With that he fell back and attached his motorcycle so close to the rear of Henry's car that you could not have put a spare tire between the two.

I'm in for it now, thought Henry. I won't be able to escape until this pest gets off my tail. Nor can I explain my position to him. He saw me run the red light. Probably he saw me run half a dozen red lights. If I told him that I wasn't a part of the funeral but only had fallen in with it in order to get to a church for a wedding, he'd have me down at headquarters before

I could shift my gears. He looks like a man who would take a narrow view of my action no matter what reasons I gave to justify it. I'd better go along and wait for the moment he turns a corner. He'll surely leave the procession at the gate of the cemetery.

Fortune was not smiling on Henry that day. The procession turned into the cemetery all right. But the grave for the burial was just inside the fence. And the officer was just outside the fence. He made no move to go away. He sat on his cycle and waited.

Henry took his place amongst the mourners. There was nothing else that he could do. He felt quite out of place. He did not know a soul in the party. Yet, the undertaker placed him directly behind the immediate mourners. The policeman was not ten feet away. Quite definitely there was no escape yet.

The service did not last long. A few prayers out of the Bible, a short talk from a minister, and that was all. It was now or never. Slowly Henry detached himself from the group around the grave, and started for his car. If only the car were a little farther away from the policeman. But then, it made no difference now. He had gone to the funeral. There wasn't a thing in the world that they could arrest him for any longer.

"These are sad things, these funerals," he said to the officer. "But then, we all have to go sooner or later." He was about to open the door of his car when he felt a tap on his shoulder. A little old woman stood before him.

"Would you mind," she asked, "running cousin Charles down to the depot? You know how cousin Charles is — unwilling to ask a favor of anyone. He hasn't changed since I last saw him twenty years ago. I hardly knew him when he appeared at the

wake. In fact I hardly know any of my relatives anymore. That's what I get for moving so far away from home and staying away so long. You're undoubtedly Tim's boy. There is a striking resemblance. But I'm rambling. Mame's death took me so by surprise that I am hardly myself. But I know that you will take care of Charles. He has to catch a train for New York in just one hour." She looked at her watch. "I do not want to trouble the family with things like this in the moment of their great sorrow."

What could Henry do? The policeman heard every word that the little old lady said. And he was holding his ground. If Henry took cousin Charles to the depot, he would miss the wedding. If he did not take cousin Charles to the depot, there might follow a need for explanations, evasions and even downright lies to allay the suspicions of the law so solidly fixed on the motorcycle.

"Why, of course," he said. "Where is cousin Charles?" It made little difference now whether he went to the depot or drove straight home. He was too late for the start of the wedding. At the reception he would have to explain what had happened.

Cousin Charles was at last at his side in the front seat of the car. The door was closed. The motor was running. Slowly Henry drove the car through the gate and headed for the depot downtown. As he straightened out on the street he looked into his mirror. The policeman was making ready to leave. He had done his duty well. He had served the dead. What better act can a man do in the month of November? Perhaps he had shortened the sentence of the soul whose body had so recently been placed in the ground. How? Well, Henry, in spite of his chagrin at being forced to

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attend the funeral of a person he did not know, was constrained by long habit to pray for the departed soul. His prayers may have been the ones nec-

essary to send that soul to heaven. And it was all due to the zeal of the policeman.

Modern Martyrs

The cruel persecutions of the early Christians have their counterpart in modern times, with nothing of their barbarity excluded. The following list of atrocities comes from Yugoslavia alone, as presented by the *Roseau Bulletin* of Dominica.

The assistant priest of Nunic was roasted on a spit and sent to his faithful as a Christmas present. The secretary of the Bishop of Zara was hacked to pieces alive, put into a sack and thrown into the sea. The parish priest of Zasiok was nailed to a cross and hung there for three days, dying under frightful torments. The parish priest of Zupa was flayed alive, and his body then thrown to the dogs. Another priest they martyred by cutting off his nose, ears and hands, and gouging out his eyes; finally his body was flung into the burning church of his own home town.

The priest Bakula Ante was stretched on the rack for eight days, was forced to eat straw, was stoned, put on a cross and finally killed. His parish was levelled to the ground. The parish priest of Podhum they tortured by nailing horse-shoes to his feet and he was then ordered to prance about until death delivered him from his sufferings. As a result of terrible torments another priest died insane.

Fifteen Franciscan Fathers of a Croatian monastery were soaked with gasoline and burned alive. The parish priest of Capljina was murdered in his church; his body and those of one hundred and twenty-nine slain parishioners were hurled into a river and the twelve parish nuns were hanged.

Murdered, shot, poisoned, imprisoned, condemned to five, seven, eleven, sixteen years of hard labor—thus the long list could be continued, name after name, place after place, victims cruelly murdered by the enemies of the Catholic Church, martyrs with their streams of blood flowing wherever the shadow of the hammer and the sickle falls.

Ready For Scolding

One day a little non-Catholic boy decided to visit the released time class conducted by a Missionary Catechist. While she was admonishing the children, Sister Veronica noticed the little fellow's eyes taking on an expression of astonishment. She assured him that she wasn't scolding him in any way but was simply reminding the Catholic children to avoid saying or doing anything that might hurt God.

With a million-dollar smile the youngster replied:

"That's all right, Sister. You can go ahead and scold too, 'cause I'm going to be a Catholic one of these days."

Thoughts for the Shut-In

L. F. Hyland

On Being Thankful for Sickness

It may at first sight seem to be a strange and heartless form of irony to speak of gratitude for illness, since the common attitude of the world is to regard sickness as a heavy and intolerable burden. Even by otherwise good Catholics it is often regarded as an unfortunate occurrence which somehow has escaped the providence of God. This attitude is indicated by the remarks that people make about illness. "What a pity that so-and-so is an invalid!" they say; or hearing that some friend or relative has cancer or some other dread disease, they shake their heads and murmur: "What a tragedy! What a shame!"

Now from the natural standpoint, there is no doubt that these visitations of sickness are hard to understand and even more difficult to bear. There is, in fact, no understanding them at all, unless we inject the supernatural into the picture. Sickness of any kind makes sense only if we follow this line of reasoning:

"Nothing happens in the world without its being the result of God's will, either directly or permissively. It is God's will, therefore, that this particular attack of sickness has come. I may not know what His purpose is in permitting it, but I accept His will as being directed to my final and complete happiness."

This is to supernaturalize suffering. Because they understood this factor so completely, the saints looked upon the time of sickness as a special opportunity to prove their love of God.

That is why St. Francis of Assisi, for instance, afflicted with eye trouble which caused him great pain, could grow so upset at one of his companions. This companion, in an ill-advised attempt to console the saint, said: "Brother Francis, what a shame that you must suffer so greatly!"

Whereupon St. Francis replied severely: "Brother, if I hear you say anything like that again, I will send you away and never see you again! This cross is sent me by God's will, and I accept it with all my heart!"

Not all shut-ins can reach the heights of holiness of a St. Francis, but at least in their quiet moments they can say: "Thank you, Lord, for this sickness and this pain; accept my patience for the good of my soul and the salvation of the world."

On Non-Reading Catholics

Finbar wrestles with a problem that the best minds have difficulty solving. In fact, individual Catholics have to solve it for themselves.

Louis G. Miller

WHEN I WENT over to the church one Monday morning not long ago I found my old friend, Finbar O'Houlihan, standing in the vestibule in front of the pamphlet rack, making a few desultory attempts to straighten things out after the confusion wrought by the Sunday crowds.

Finbar was a confirmed bachelor in his late fifties, but still hale and hearty, despite his bald head and the somewhat gnarled cast of his Irish countenance. I would have liked to have had Finbar for my janitor, since I was at that time struggling along without one. He was unemployed, or at least whatever work he did was only occasional and infrequent, but he turned me aside whenever I brought up the subject.

"The janitor job is not for me," he said. "Begging leave of your reverence, I value my liberty too much to be tied down to the ringing of bells and the sweeping of the school, with all the clutter of trash left behind by the children. I'll give you a hand now and again, you can count on it, but that's all I can in conscience promise to do."

And giving me a hand was precisely what Finbar thought he was doing that Monday morning in the church vestibule, although it was apparent his mind was busier than his hands. O'Houlihan was born to be a philosopher, and a voluble one at that.

"Good morning, Mr. O'Houlihan," I said.

"The top of the morning to yourself, Father," he replied. "I was just

thinking to myself," he went on without a pause, "that there is a tremendous lot of stupidity among people at large."

I sighed to myself and prepared for a harangue. I could of course have cut him off before he got started, but that would have wounded his Irish heart, and besides, to tell the truth, I rather liked to hear him carry on.

"Come now, Mr. O'Houlihan, that's a pretty extreme statement," I said.

"It's the simple, sober truth, Father. All you have to do is to take a look at this table and at the pamphlet rack."

I took a look at them, as advised.

"They seem to be in a state of disarray," I said, "but I fail to follow you in the conclusion that you draw."

Finbar swept his hand with a flourish over the stack of *Sunday Visitors* and *Registers* on the table. There was, as usual, quite a considerable number of them left after the Sunday Masses.

"Look at these papers," he said. "How many of them do you order each week?"

"A hundred copies of each."

"And you have about ten times that many people coming to Mass. That means nine out of ten people don't even bother to pick them up. It isn't that they haven't got a nickel or a dime to spare. Most of them, I dare say, wouldn't be interested even if they could take them for nothing."

"I suppose you're right."

"Sure I'm right, and that attitude of mind indicates stupidity."

"That's a pretty harsh term, Finbar.

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Let's say they don't know any better."

Finbar snorted.

"Look at the assortment of pamphlets here," he said. "Do you notice anything about them?"

"Not at the moment. They're good pamphlets. I ordered them myself."

"Sure, they're all right. But notice the ones that are getting the most play. The ones whose titles suggest something about sex. See — they're the ones that are dog-eared from being pawed over. They're the ones scattered around the place by the cheap-skates who pick them up, hoping to find something juicy. They paw them over and read parts of them, and they aren't even willing to pay a thin dime to take them home and read them at their leisure."

"But there's nothing wrong with those pamphlets. People should read them, to get the right slant on sex."

"I don't deny it for a minute. But do you think they're interested in that? Begging your reverence's pardon, not on your life. They want something else. I say they're stupid."

"Well, I don't agree with you, Mr. O'Houlihan. They're misguided, not stupid. Their minds are filled with a lot of different things, and they have lost their perspective on the important things in life."

"Begging your reverence's pardon again, you call it what you want, and I'll call it what I want."

"But surely you are wrong, Finbar, in saying that most Catholics are totally uninterested in reading about the faith. I know many who are interested, and who read regularly and intelligently. But I will agree with you that there are many who don't. How would you analyze their state of mind?"

"I'll tell you how I've got it figured," said Finbar, tapping me on the chest with an impressive forefinger. "The

non-reading Catholic figures in one of two ways. First, he may figure that he can't learn anything new from Catholic reading."

"But how could he think that?"

"Because he's got a very shallow idea of what religion is all about. Religion to him means a few external actions, and that's all. He goes to Mass on Sunday, doesn't eat meat on Friday, makes his Easter duty, and clapping himself on the chest, he says: 'I know what I'm supposed to do as a Catholic; why spend a lot of time reading about it.'"

"There are people like that," I said. "I've met them."

"Sure there are. They've got the minds of children, as far as the faith is concerned. They never grew up. Oh, they may be smart enough to make a lot of money or to hold their own in high society, and they consider themselves very mature. But as far as their faith is concerned, they've still got the mind of one of your fifth graders over in the school."

"I know the type you mean," I said. "If you ask such a one 'Why are you a Catholic?' he looks blank, scratches his head, and says: 'I guess it's just because I happened to be born one.'"

"Or like my friend Hallahan. I asked him the other day, just testing him: 'Hallahan,' I said, 'why do we have Catholic schools?' Hallahan thought a minute, and do you know what he answered?"

"What?"

"He said 'To keep the good nuns busy, I suppose.'"

We shook our heads sadly, O'Houlihan and I.

"And these are the people, mind you," he went on, "Who will give you an argument that they don't need any Catholic reading because they know all about what they're supposed to do.

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God save the mark, they're worse off than my nine-year-old nephew, Rory. He knows his catechism by rote, and that's all the child is supposed to know at his age. But they've even forgotten most of what they once learned by memory, and what little they do remember has grown to be pretty well mixed-up in their own minds."

"And what about the second type?"

"The second type of non-reader may subscribe to a whole batch of Catholic magazines, but he does so out of a feeling of charity. He wants to help the poor struggling missionaries, and more power to him for feeling that way. But when the magazines are delivered by the postman, they stay in their jackets, and after cluttering up the table in the front room for a few days, the Missus carts them down to the basement, where they pile up, waiting for the next paper drive."

"There's something in what you say, Finbar."

"And what is their reason for not reading any of them? Because, they say, they're not interesting. They don't bother to prove or disprove that statement to themselves. It's a final judgment. They don't say to themselves, as a sensible person would, 'Well now, let's look into the matter. Some of these doubtless I won't find much to my taste, but there must be others I would like. Let's make a little investigation.' They make the foolish, shallow judgment: 'All Catholic reading is uninteresting.'"

"And what's strange is that they don't act that way in regard to other

magazines."

"Not on your life. They have their *Life* and *Time* and, God help us! the movie magazines and their ilk, which call for the intelligence of a moron. They pick and choose among these magazines for the ones they like, but when it comes to Catholic reading, they say, 'It's not interesting.' What they really mean is that 'We're too lazy to be bothered.'"

"Well, it's indeed a dismal picture you paint, Mr. O'Houlihan. What do you suppose can be done about it?"

"I don't know, Father. All we can do is keep trying to get the beam of a searchlight through the thick fog of their self-imposed ignorance."

Finbar was silent for a moment, then he gave me a sidelong glance as he busied himself about the rack.

"I think priests are somewhat to blame, too," he said.

"In what way?"

"Well, it's only on rare occasions that you hear them give a real plug to Catholic reading in their sermons. Why, you take our own church here. On rare occasions, when the good pastor, meaning yourself, takes the time to speak a few glowing words about some special article in the *Register* or the *Visitor* or any other publication, we usually don't have a copy left after the last Mass. I'd be the last person in the world to dictate to your reverence, but maybe you could do that a little more often."

"I could, Finbar, and I will."

And I did.

To Have and to Hold

With autumn weddings and the chill of fall evenings just around the corner, the following bit of wisdom may come in the nick of time.

"Child," said Grandma to the new bride, "I hope your lot's goin' ter be easier than mine. All my wedded days I've carried two burdens — pa and the fire. Every time I've turned to look at one, the other has gone out."



For Wives and Husbands Only

Donald F. Miller

Burial or Cremation for Babies?

Problem: Some time ago my sister gave birth to a premature baby that weighed only two pounds. It lived only three hours, but was baptized before it died. On another occasion she had a seven months' baby that lived two days, but was also baptized. She had these babies in a non-Catholic hospital, and the authorities of the hospital told her that they would have the babies cremated at once if she would permit it. In both cases she refused, and had the babies buried. Many people have criticized her for this, saying that cremation would be permitted in the case of a premature infant. What is correct in these cases? May still-born babies, who were not baptized, be cremated? Does the size of the baby, or baptism or non-baptism have anything to do with what is allowed? One friend of mine told me she permitted her one-pound still-born baby to be cremated because she thought it had no soul since it died before birth.

Solution: The mother who insisted on having her baptized premature babies buried instead of cremated did the only right thing. Cremation is forbidden by the law of the Catholic Church not only for adult Catholics, but for all, even tiny babies prematurely born. This is to show the proper reverence for a body that has been, through baptism, a temple of the Holy Ghost destined for a glorious resurrection at the end of the world.

Even still-born babies that have not been baptized should be buried. The law of the Church directs that a place be set aside, in connection with Catholic cemeteries, where non-baptized infants should be buried. The law holds in the case of any premature birth or miscarriage in which the body is recognizable. A baby possesses an immortal soul as soon as conception as a human being takes place. That is why the body must always be treated with reverence.

This, of course, means that, whenever it is possible, an attempt should be made to baptize babies no matter how undeveloped or small, if there is any probability that they are still living after the miscarriage. Nurses in Catholic hospitals and well-trained Catholic doctors know what procedure to follow in these emergencies.

In the case of early miscarriage in which it is impossible to distinguish any formed foetus or body, there is no obligation in regard to baptism or burial.

Where Courage is Raw

A glimpse of what it means to be a mother and a child in a Russian-occupied country. Count your blessings and pray for the lost.

Francis Lee

THIS IS the story of Cookie.

She is Cookie because some G.I's came upon her, when she was two years old, and soon her face was wreathed in G.I. chocolate. One of the soldiers picked her up, tossed her in the air, and laughed out:

"Look at the cookie!" Thus the G.I. heart. Everything lovely had to be compared with what was lovely at home, his mother's cookies.

Not long afterward, Cookie and her mother were swept away to become guests, as it were, at a Russian concentration camp in Poland. Cookie will remain just Cookie in our little story, because her beautiful Christian name and surname, if divulged, might mean trouble for her aunts and her uncles, who still live behind a certain, painstakingly ironed, curtain.

She was nine years old last week, and her little body is gradually overcoming the thin years of her miserable infancy.

Miserable infancy. Her father had been killed in the defense of Warsaw, but Cookie has a wonderful mother, whose whole life was to nurture life in her little daughter. She did it. She did it this way: work and work until you have ten gold dollars (always ten gold dollars) to pay another woman to take your child to her breast, because your own life-giving strength and milk have been sapped away. You have crawled along too many ruts in too many fields, seeking something fresh and green to be devoured raw, so that you might have something to give. You have nursed her for eighteen

months, en route. En route nowhere, for eighteen months.

And when you finally apply for work, you hide the baby under your coat, because your one value in their eyes is your ability to work, and the child will cut down your efficiency, 'tis said. Without work, you and the child die in twenty-four hours. You starve to death. Unless, more gently, and with less raving, you freeze to death in the snow.

Count your blessings, American ladies, mothers.

Cookie haunts her bubble bath today, though she certainly was not trained that way. In our fair land, the baby's daily bath is a sacred, unfailing ritual. With clever foraging, Cookie's mother washed her baby with soap twice a year.

Our little lady saw her first layette here in the States. She was four years old, and it was a little late to slip into one (whatever they are. Do you wear it or sleep on it?). Mrs. Cookie (mother, of course) used to rush off the European train at any station stop, and run down to the engine to wait for the steam to be released. Then she washed the diaper in it. Back to the car and to Cookie, while the diaper was drying next to her own skin. Nothing like travelling light. Chaotic nothing.

We Americans love our planes, whether we fly them or look up at them.

"The planes are coming over!"

A surge of strength and confidence wells up, windows are raised high,

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children go tumbling into the streets, and grown people walk out in front of the passing traffic, eyes glued to the sky. What a country!

Not quite thus in every land.

"The planes are coming over!"

Windows are slammed down, children are whisked into the basement, and stalking horror is the only traffic in the street.

Less happily, you may be caught in the fields when the planes come over. You are a pitiful, little, dark object, a pitiful, little, dark target, pinned in a great white expanse of snow. With a prayer, you sink to the ground, and wait. Underneath you lies Cookie, who will not be hurt unless the bullets go through you.

But you and Cookie lived again. Really lived again, for every reprieve from death was new, grateful life. Life in sections; life in camps, and towns and trains; life along the roads, life in cellars, in lofts, but still life.

Cookie's mother taught school in an occupied town. The Russians were occupying it, so she was clearly briefed on what she was to teach. She was to teach little Polish boys and girls to become big, strong communists. She agreed. After all, it meant bed and board for her and Cookie. After all, she would carry Polish textbooks to school every day. She would carry them under her clothing and teach Polish thought and Polish love beneath the very noses of the Russians. Soldiers and civilians were stumbling over each other in their cloak and dagger efforts around town. Spies galore. Mrs. Cookie did not like to think of the penalty if she were caught. She wasn't. Two years of it.

Raw courage is not a fleeting mo-

ment of inadvertence to danger, whereupon we rush in, and come out, either dead or with a recommendation for a medal. It is a lack of fear, based on a belief in our right cause and in the eventual proclamation of its righteousness, in this life or in the next. In other words, we are still protected. Cookie's mother added the last note to that protection.

"I did not fear. I believed in my mother's prayers before God."

Great noble hearts! Nobler spirits! Who can think to destroy such a spirit? Or starve it, or chain it, or ever to slay it! It rises always free, because God made it free, and free it stays. It is given to no man really to destroy another's spirit. Each destroys or liberates his own. And one day, in a sunny garden, somewhere here in our country, a little girl asked her mother where Poland is. And Cookie's mother looked down into the eyes of this child that she had borne so long, and with such terrible hurt, up from the valley of death.

"Come closer, little one, and put your hand upon my heart. There is Poland. And as long as a Polish heart shall beat anywhere in the world, the heart of Poland beats with it!"

The Polish military salute (in the days when a free citizen of Poland raised his hand) was a two-fingered salute. It was accompanied by two words. For those whom it will remind of other, kinder, happier years, we write it in salute:

"Bog i Ojczyzna!"

"For God and country!" And up the two fingers in salute.

Keep them high, Poland! For God and country!

There is still God.

Experience is what you get when you are looking for something else.

Friendly News

The Man Who Came Through the Roof

One of the most revealing of all the miracles of Christ, both of His love for the poor and of His divine power, was in behalf of the man who came through the roof.

Raymond J. Miller

OUR LORD was never patronizing to the poor. Even though He was divine Himself, and knew it, He treated poor human beings like a human being Himself, with kindly, direct interest in and understanding of their ways and their woes. His own way with them carried never a trace of the amused and superior mockery with which the more fortunate ones of this world are wont to view their "inferiors". In the expressive popular phrase, Jesus Christ "liked people."

In fact, if ever He did seem to become lofty and aloof, it was rather with the rich than the poor. Towards the elegant and influential royal official of Galilee, for instance, who came begging desperately for the cure of his dying little son, Our Lord showed Himself strikingly unceremonious. Though the man was probably prime minister in the government of King Herod, Jesus remained completely unimpressed; and when finally He did consent to work the miracle, His manner of doing so was more in the way of something "patronizing" than any of His replies to the poor.

Go on home

said Jesus Christ to the Prime Minister;

your son is going to live;

almost as though He were giving the

great man a patronizing pat on the back in an offhand fatherly way. And the child was cured "at the same hour."

Quite different, however, was His way with a poor paralyzed man in Capharnaum, "the man who came through the roof."

If ever Jesus had an opportunity to be patronizing, it was on this occasion. Here He had the poor making perfect fools of themselves in the presence of their "betters." In the world's way, their "betters" had a royal chance to vent sarcastic and superior displeasure, or at best to speak with patronizing amusement as they viewed the extraordinary proceeding.

For the poor man did literally "come through the roof." This is how the Evangelists describe the scene:

Jesus came to His own city. And it was heard that He was in the house, and many came together, so that there was no room, not even at the door. And He spoke to them the Word. And they came to Him bringing a paralyzed man, who was carried by four. And when they could not reach Him because of the crowd, they uncovered the roof where He was, and opening it they let down the bed with the sick man lying upon it.

Such was the situation; a strange one in many ways: interesting in its background, startling in its setting, with Our Lord's reaction typical of

His mastery of the unexpected answer.

We find Jesus in "His own city," and "in the house." Evidently the city was Bethsaida or Capharnaum, not Nazareth; and this is an intriguing item to begin with. It would appear that from the very outset of His public life He had cut Himself off very definitely from His boyhood home of Nazareth, and as far as He had any city He could call His own, it was the fishermen's port of Capharnaum.

Then the Evangelist's mention of "*the* house" rouses our curiosity as to just whose house it was that Our Lord had taken over so familiarly. The chances are (and Gospel commentators suggest) that it was none other than the house of Simon Peter, where Jesus had cured Simon's mother-in-law when she lay ill of a fever.

But what about this peculiar business of letting a man on a stretcher down through the roof of the house? How could such a thing be possible? The explanation lies in an understanding of the structure of the houses of the ordinary people in Our Lord's day. Students of that time tell us that the roofs consisted of rafters on which were laid slabs of hardened earth (something like the turf or peat of Ireland, although one wonders how they kept their ceilings from dripping mud on wet days); and over the slabs of earth were laid sets of ties. Alongside the house was a stairway leading to the roof.

Thus the paralytic's friends could have hauled him up this outside stairway and then gone to work on the roof without too much difficulty: "uncovering" it by removing the tiles, and "opening" it by taking off the slabs of earth.

Even so, however, it was hardly the normal procedure, especially if it happened to be (as in the present case)

someone else's house. There must have been considerable amazed or indignant outcry when the Master's discourse was interrupted in this violent manner. Moreover, if the house belonged to Simon Peter, it would have been only in perfect keeping with his fiery disposition and according to what we know from another passage in the Gospel itself about his way of expressing himself under sudden strain, if we suppose that when he saw daylight appear through the rafters of his house his first impulse was to greet the intruders with a well-seasoned burst of vigorous nautical language.

The Gospel story, however, says nothing whatever about the excitement that must have accompanied the entrance of the "man who came through the roof." And it is here that we begin to see our divine Lord taking charge of the situation. Reading between the lines of the story, we find a very good reason for the silence of the Evangelists about what the crowd was doing; for Jesus was at work Himself; at work in His familiar role of taking sides with the poor. He was doing so on the present occasion with such promptitude and decision, with so completely unexpected a greeting for the poor paralyzed man, that all else was forgotten.

And Jesus, seeing their faith, said to the paralyzed man: Take heart, son; your sins are forgiven you.

He shows not the slightest surprise or disapproval at this crude interruption of His discourse. He makes no witty remark for the benefit of the crowd at the expense of the bungling earnestness of the poor cripple and his friends. Least of all does He dismiss the sick man with an air of indulgent patronizing superiority. No; in-

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stead of being distant or superior, He is instantly on the side of the trembling cripple and his poor puffing, sweating friends; so completely on their side that no one else dares be against them. He took them seriously; He spoke with simple directness to their simple faith. "Jesus, seeing *their* faith," says St. Matthew; not only the faith of the sick man himself, but that of his friends as well! The Doctors of the Church and Saints from the earliest times have called attention to this phrase, and what it means to the friends of those who need prayers for cure or conversion.

But Our Lord's extraordinary greeting: *Take heart, son; your sins are forgiven you*, becomes particularly significant if we take another look at the crowd in the house around Our Lord.

It was not merely a gathering of the simple local townfolk; on this occasion there were some very distinguished visitors listening to Christ. St. Luke says that

there were Pharisees and doctors of the law sitting by, who had come out of every town of Galilee and Judea, and from Jerusalem. And the power of the Lord was there to cure diseases.

This was early in Our Lord's public life. His reputation was spreading. People were beginning to say He was "the Christ," or "Elias" or "the prophet," as they had said about St. John the Baptist a year or two before. The Pharisees and Doctors of the Law, even in Jerusalem, began to hear the rumors; and as they had done in the case of St. John, so now they set out to test the reports for themselves. Here they were, gathered around this new Prophet as He "spoke the word" in the house in Capharnaum. They were not yet so completely hostile to Him

as they were later to become; for the present their attitude was rather one of patronizing curiosity.

And the power of the Lord was there to cure diseases.

The divine power of Christ and God stood ready to rouse itself and work miracles of curing so that these leaders of the people might have their answer. As St. Cyril says:

In the presence of such a gathering of Scribes and Pharisees it was necessary that something be done to attest His power before these men full of contempt for Him; and so a miracle was worked for the paralyzed man.

Jesus Christ gave them their answer in divine terms; and for any honest, fair-minded man the answer would have been plain enough. Where St. John the Baptist had denied that he was Christ, or Elias, or the prophet, Our Lord took advantage of the strange case of the man who came through the roof to work a miracle proving that He was not only the Messiah, or the Christ, but that He was God Almighty in human form. With the sick man lowered and lying at His feet; with his friends peering anxiously through their hole in the roof; with the assembly in the room, especially the owner of the house, ready to call the police; with the learned Pharisees exchanging supercilious looks of amusement and contempt, He said:

Take heart, son; your sins are forgiven you.

It was a surprising thing to say (to put it very mildly). So surprising to St. Peter or whoever was the owner of the house that they forgot all about

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their indignation. Surprising and wonderfully consoling to the poor man himself. To his friends looking down from the roof it was surprising with at least a little of disappointment. Even though Our Lord had taken the part of the poor man because of "their" faith, this was hardly the kind of thing they had hoped to hear Him say. To the lofty and aloof Pharisees, moreover, it was surprising and highly offensive.

Who is this talking blasphemy? (they said);

Who can forgive sins but God alone?

"Take heart, son;" but why did Our Lord have to start out with this word of encouragement? What fears and shrinking were in the sick man's heart to require such reassurance at the very outset?

It is not hard to surmise the answer. The man was not only a victim of disease, but also of sin; and he knew it. The thought of his sins was uppermost in his mind as his generous friends hauled him up and let him down in their faith for a bodily cure. He was sorry for his sins (Our Lord would never have forgiven them if he was not sorry); but still they haunted him. "How can a wretch like myself hope for a cure? If the Master has power to cure me, He also will be able to see into my soul; and what He sees there will surely make Him refuse to have anything to do with me!"

Jesus did see into his soul; He "knew his thoughts" as well as He did those of the Pharisees; and what He saw there — sorrow as well as sin, fear of his unworthiness with struggling humble hope — brought Him close to the poor man instead of keeping Him far away. He worked his greatest miracle for him.

Take heart, son; your sins are forgiven you.

Such was Our divine Lord's greeting to the poor paralyzed sinner. It lifted a weight of dread from his heart; at the same time it cast a spell of startled silence on the crowd. It was also the beginning of His answer to the curious Pharisees and Doctors of the Law. Had they been fair-minded and humble themselves, they would have been willing to consider further the claims of a Man Who could still an excited crowd with so completely unexpected a phrase. As it was, they found it only an offensive "blasphemy."

Who is this talking blasphemy?

Who can forgive sins but God alone?

In fact, to their way of thinking there were two things wrong with this answer. It made entirely too much of a sinful wretch, the poor blundering cripple whose sins were "forgiven;" and it proved entirely too much for Christ Himself. A Messiah, yes; they might accept this independent young Prophet from Nazareth as such if He showed proper respect for themselves; but a man claiming to exercise power that belonged only to God, never. They were "thinking evil in their hearts;" evil envy was blocking the way to generous belief.

But Jesus knew what they were thinking about; and so He went on exposing His divine credentials.

Which is easier to say, (He asked them);

Your sins are forgiven you, or Arise and walk?

And then came the final proof in these words:

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That you may know that the Son of Man has power on earth to forgive sins,

(and with that He turned to the man still lying on his pallet):

Get up; take up your bed, and go home.

At once, as if filled with an impulse and power not his own, the man swung his feet over the side of the pallet, stood up, picked up the stretcher, slung it over his shoulder, and made his way through the gaping throng out of the house.

The Pharisees had their answer. Jesus, "knowing their thoughts," knowing that they had come "from every town of Galilee and Judea and from Jerusalem" to find out for themselves what He had to say for Himself, gave them their answer in three clear steps or stages: first, in their presence He publicly forgave the man's sins, a thing that could be done only by the power of God; secondly, when they were offended by this bold claim to divine power, He offered to prove it by a miracle; and thirdly, He actually gave the proof by working the miracle.

That you may know that the Son of Man has power on earth to forgive sins:

this is the key step in the proof. And it takes on a new depth of meaning if we note specially the phrase: "*The Son of Man* has power on earth to

forgive sins." For in modern idiom the term, "The Son of Man," means "The Human Being," the name Our Lord constantly gave Himself during His public life. This name has mystery in many ways; but here it is literally paradoxical. Jesus Christ calls Himself "The Human Being" in the act of proving that He possesses divine power.

Whatever the depths and reaches of divine wisdom in this paradox, one thing would seem to stand out clearly. Our Divine Lord was thinking not only of the Pharisees and Doctors of the Law before Him in the house in Capernaum, but of all the doubters down the ages who would profess to be offended or scandalized at the divine power to forgive sins which He was to commit to other human beings, the priests of His Church. In effect, He was saying for all the ages to hear:

That you may know that God, that I as God, can give to a human being the power to forgive sins: here is the proof.

And in that sense there may even be a special inspiration of the Holy Ghost in the words with which St. Matthew concludes his account of the miracle:

And the crowd seeing it, feared, and glorified God *Who gave such power to men.*

Formula

Christ bids me take up my cross; therefore I accept the daily opportunities which occur of yielding to others, when I need not yield, and of doing unpleasant services, which I might avoid. He bids those who would be highest, live as the lowest: therefore, let me turn away from ambitious thoughts. He aids me sell and give alms; therefore let me hate to spend money on myself; shut my ears to praise when it grows loud: set my face like a flint when the world ridicules, and smile at its threats.

Cardinal Newman

For Non-Catholics Only

F. M. Louis

How to Become a Catholic

Problem: I was married ten years ago to a devout Catholic. I took the necessary instructions before marriage, was favorably impressed, but felt that I could not become a Catholic because of my Protestant family. Since then I have attended Mass often, and for the past two years we have taken THE LIGUORIAN and I have found it very helpful in making clear to me all Catholic beliefs. I now think that I understand and could accept them all and I wish to become a Catholic. I must tell you that I did fall into sins when I was young. Would those past sins make me ineligible to become a Catholic? Maybe you can tell me in one of your issues whether I am eligible to become a Catholic and, if I am, what procedure I should follow.

Solution: Have no fear whatsoever that any sins of your past will stand in the way of your becoming a Catholic. Our Lord founded His Church for all, even saying that He came "to save not the just but sinners." It is through the Church that you will gain the wonderful assurance that all your past sins have been forgiven by God.

The procedure for becoming a Catholic is a very simple one. All you have to do is call at the rectory of the parish near you, ask for one of the priests, and tell him just what you have stated in your letter to me, that you would like to become a Catholic. He will give you a course of instructions to make sure that you understand what all Catholics believe and practice, and then he will receive you into the Church. You will be surprised to learn how happy the priest will be to make you a full-fledged member of the true religion established by Christ for your salvation.

I know that it will make your husband happy when he learns that you are becoming a Catholic. If you wish you can make it a joyous surprise for him, by slipping off to see the priest by yourself and taking some or all your instructions before telling him about it. But if you prefer, and if it would make it easier for you, you may tell your husband of your decision before approaching the priest, and may ask him to accompany you when you first call on the priest. I am sure he would be delighted "to break the ice" for you.

Keep up your reading during and after the course of your instructions. You will find, like thousands of other converts, that there is no joy in all the world equal to that of possessing the truth about religion, and of sharing the wonderful spiritual treasures that Christ intended for you in His Church.

New Guinea Remembered

Reminiscences of far-off places and seemingly far-off days, and of the strange circumstances into which one can be thrown by war.

Louis G. Miller

THE OTHER day on a train I chanced to meet Jack McConnell from Chicago, an ex-G.I. of World War II, and talking to him brought back a lot of memories which had begun to fade and grow dim in my mind.

Jack and I found that we had something in common, in that both of us had put in a year or so in the same sector of the island of New Guinea. We had never encountered each other there, but we had had a number of similar experiences, and had seen many of the same places. We talked for several hours, until Jack, who is a salesman, had to leave the train at a small Ohio city.

After we had parted my memory continued to unwind its record of the past, and I found myself sufficiently interested, upon returning home, to look up some scattered notes and small souvenirs I had saved from my New Guinea days. I found myself thinking how interesting it would be to make a trip to that far-off island after these ten intervening years.

Any serviceman might, of course, feel the same way about the places he had visited by courtesy of the military service, during the war, whether in the far-off islands of the Pacific or the Aleutians or the countries of Europe. One of the leading magazines carried a picture account not long ago of a soldier making his way over the same area in France where he had fought and seen his buddies die, and finding mementoes here and there along the way, despite the green blanket with

which nature had covered the scenes of battle, and the rehabilitation wrought by the industry of men.

It is reasonably certain that I shall never be able to voyage to New Guinea for such a visit, but I can go there at least in fancy, and perhaps among my readers there will be some from among the one hundred thousand Americans or more who were thrust by the war on the rugged Guinea shore and gazed in awe, as I did, at the steaming Guinea jungle.

When most people think of an island, they picture a small body of land like the pine-covered patch in the center of Lake Witchagooney, where they spent a week with aunt Lulu last summer. We used to be amused, I remember, when someone in the states would write to us in New Guinea and say: "My brother Ned is stationed in New Guinea, so be sure to look him up."

The fact is, New Guinea is a king-sized island; according to the little army guide-book issued to us before we landed there, it is the second largest in the world, only Greenland being larger. It covers 1300 miles from end to end — the distance from New York to Omaha, and is about 400 miles across at the widest point. Add to this the fact that the road system was sketchy in the extreme, and indeed non-existent as far as the interior was concerned, and you will readily understand that Lae and Finnschhafen, although only about 50 miles apart as the crow flies, were farther

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apart than New York and Chicago as far as intercommunication was concerned.

It was at Lae that my unit made its landing on New Guinea. Lae is in that part of the island mandated by Australia, and the settlement was supposedly the leading one in that territory before the war.

There was, however, no city or village to be seen when we landed in January, 1944. Our bombers had taken care of that; the occupying Japs had been pushed out only a short time before, and the flimsy buildings had been literally obliterated in the process. There was nothing there but a dusty truck-trail along the sea, and a few scattered clusters of tents, harboring detachments of Australian and American troops. Lae is considered to have one of the best harbors of the island, but there were no harbor facilities in operation; we clambered down landing nets and into small craft for the trip to shore.

I suppose Lae is back on its feet long since, and perhaps again is worthy of its title, "Queen of New Guinea." I can imagine the rows of white tropical houses, with the Australian foreign service officials and their families, schools, churches, and the natives, with their wild and bristling hair and their glistening black skin, methodically chewing their betel-nut as they walk the streets in the blazing sun, performing their tasks with the infinite slowness which so aggravated the American temperament — until the Americans had spent enough time themselves on the equator to be considerably slowed down.

The natives were not slow, however, as they drilled in their companies out along the hillsides, and that sight I would like to see again. I would like to see a hundred of them, clad only in

the breech-cloths, with rifles on shoulders, bare-footed, as they smartly marched under their sergeants. These were the native police, proud as punch of their position, and willing to show off before any kind of audience.

No doubt the shoulder-high kunai grass has obliterated all traces of our presence in 1944 at Nadzab valley, 30 miles up the Markham river from Lae. Here later in the year were the Fifth Air Force headquarters, with ample runways for the fighters and bombers striking against Wewak and Aitape and Madang and Hollandia further up the coast. Thousands of airmen settled down here temporarily as the war effort expanded; I wonder what rusty pieces of scrap and discarded equipment and pitiful little reminders of American ingenuity are rusting beneath the waving green.

We used to stand by the runways in the flat center of the valley and watch the P-38's cavorting in the air as they returned from a successful strike, and the B-25's with their grinning shark's mouth, designed to frighten the enemy while the plane strafed at low level, and the big Liberators lumbering home. What a bustling place it was! I wonder if there are any signs of our presence left at all.

At one end of the valley, against a towering mountain, was a hospital center of sorts, and this is where I lived and worked as a chaplain. Here, at the peak of activity, four hospitals spread their tents, and at a feverish pace, patched up the infantry boys, wounded in jungle sorties or in dawn landings along the Guinea coast or on the Admiralty islands lying not far off. Here also the airmen were brought, wounded by flak or shattered and burned, perhaps, in a crash on take-off or landing. Here also we sweated out the cases of malaria and scrub

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typhus, wondering which way the sickness would turn, watching sadly, perhaps, as death crept in and claimed its own.

Here also the medics tried to cope with the many strange new manifestations of disease. "FUO," they would write on the sick man's card, "fever of unknown origin". These were American doctors, coming to grips with human ills hitherto undiscovered. I used to watch them as, horrified yet fascinated, they treated some fantastic case of skin disease — "jungle rot" the G.I.'s called it — which had turned a man into one huge inflamed purple sore.

I wonder if the chapel of which I was so proud is still standing, and if Suki, the "number-one boy" among the fuzzy-wuzzies who worked for us, ever finds his way through the *kunai* from his mountain home to look sadly at the ruins. It was not much of a chapel, as chapels go, open on all sides, with stout trees cut down to support the corners, and the roof made up of interlaced vines covered thickly with long grass. Not a nail had gone into the making of that substantial roof, and Suki and his men were rightly proud of it.

Over the altar inside, and suspended from the roof, we had a parachute, outflung in all its white splendor, and for a few feet around the altar we had an honest to goodness floor. Planed lumber was hard to come by in New Guinea, but an enterprising sergeant from Philadelphia had secured a supply for me. I did not ask him how. Into the chapel in the summer of 1944 we would crowd 500 men for a couple of Masses, until the war moved on, and our parish had to be abandoned.

When I left Nadzab for the Philippines later in 1944, they were already taking up the bodies of the men who

had been buried there in order to transport them to the States, or to move them to other and larger cemeteries more centrally located. I wonder if I could even find the site where I committed the body of many a young American to the dust from which it came. It was a beautiful site, well kept up in those days, with its neat rows of white crosses, and it lay in a corner of the valley, with the hills sloping gently away from it, and behind them, the rugged mountains casting their solemn shadows over all. Some of the units, when one of their men was buried, would station a bugler off in the hills out of sight, and when taps was sounded at the graveside, the echo from the unseen bugler would come softly and sweetly back. There was a piercing, sad beauty about it, and I often saw it bring tears to the eyes of the honor guard and the rifle squad, even as the sound of their volleys crashed against the mountain and returned.

One day several of us were able to wangle a trip on a small Navy cutter down the coast to Salamaua and to Buna-Gona. I don't suppose the aspect of the coast has changed since we made that trip, with the palm trees spreading thickly down to a narrow strip of beach at the water's edge, and the impenetrable jungle beyond. For all the great numbers of men and the fighting on New Guinea, we did not really make much headway against nature there. We had our camps and settlements at the water's edge, and in an occasional clearing, but the jungle loomed up forbiddingly all around, and one felt that the forces of nature were jealously watching us, waiting for us to be gone, that they might quickly obliterate all traces of our having been there.

Buna and Salamaua were sites of some very bitter fighting, when the

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32nd division was trying desperately to push back the Japs from their farthest points of advance. When we visited there the fighting had long since ceased, and the solemn stillness of the jungle had settled over the spot where so many men had fought and died in loneliness and agony. I don't suppose I shall ever see a more beautiful place than Salamaua, where a spit of land juts out into the blue Pacific, with the white surf booming up on both sides, and the coral, in every pastel shade, glitters and glistens in the sun.

Towards the end of 1944 I received orders to move up to the Philippines, which had just been opened up to our attack. Before doing so, I had to fly south to Milne Bay. I remember being impressed at the huge stores of ordnance and supplies of all kinds which were accumulated there. I wonder if I could find the little inlet there where we swam, and the great coconut grove not far away, which seemed almost cultivated, so evenly the trees were spaced.

I remember a bearded Australian missionary priest in Milne Bay. He had only recently come out of the interior, where for 30 years and more he had been working for the natives, with never a vacation or furlough. He looked with wonder at our army vehicles and our tremendous stores. We

took him to a movie (the first he had ever seen), and he was bewildered. He found the pace of outside life much too fast, and after a brief visit to Australia, expressed his wish to return again to his people.

No doubt (unless death has since claimed him) he is still working there in his lonely clearing. I remember reflecting at the time that the work he was doing was constructive and would endure; our activity was part of the destructive orgy of war. We swept in and built roads with our bull-dozers, dug gullies for our anti-aircraft; we feverishly cleared a small area of jungle for our tents; we shattered a few palm trees with our artillery. But the spasm subsided, we returned home, and the jungle soon covered the small scars we left behind.

But he, quietly and without fanfare, slowly, in tune with the pace of the native temperament, built for the future; the jungle that he cleared in human hearts would remain clear and open to the sunlight of God's grace forever.

Comparing the tremendous spasm of war with his unknown, pitiful little labor of a lifetime, there can surely be no doubt as to which of them is the greater contribution to the happiness of the world.

The Grateful Agnostic

O God (if there should be a God)
Thanks for the gifts that came
From You, (I rather doubt they did),
But thank You just the same.
Permit me to rejoice (although
I really don't know why)
On this Thanksgiving Day (I hope
This prayer will get me by.)

LGM

Readers Retort

In which readers are invited to express their minds on articles and opinions published in *The Liguorian*. Letters must be signed and full address of the writer must be given, though city and name will be withheld from publication on request.

Marshfield, Wis.

"Having read the article 'The Book and the Battle,' in the September *LIGUORIAN*, I feel that, being one of the graduates of a state school 'with a predominantly secularistic attitude' I should say something in our behalf. In condemning such institutions you are also condemning some very conscientious instructors and students. I can say that during my four years at a state college I acquired a deeper understanding and appreciation of my Catholic faith. This came as a result of association with some very excellent instructors who were Catholic. It might also be pointed out to your readers that there are Newman Clubs in most secular universities, which provide frequent sermons and guided instructions for the Catholics there. There are similar clubs for other faiths, whose leaders are certainly not communistic or atheistic. Surely there are some 'liberals' such as your article described, but there is also Christian thought present.

R.S."

We are acquainted ourselves with individuals who survived a four-year course in state universities without losing their faith. We also know good Catholics who teach in such institutions. But, having lectured and preached retreats to Catholic groups in several state universities, we are of the opinion that the "liberal" principles, textbooks and teachers influence a wider number than do the minority of Catholic instructors and the often unused opportunities for growth in religious conviction offered to Catholics.

The editors

Milwaukee, Wisc.

"After reading 'The Book and the Bat-

tle' in your September issue, the thought strikes me that it is a wonderful thing that God in His supreme goodness keeps the souls and bodies of the 'liberals' together even while they deny Him or declare His Universe to be free-wheeling after creation. Strange paradox, but proof of His infinite love to an ordinary person like myself.

G. J. R."

It was God Himself Who once said, "Only the fool hath said in his heart there is no God."

The editors

Everett, Mass.

"While visiting friends recently I ran across your July issue with the article 'Why Birth-control is Wrong.' I have been probing this matter for some time, and, if you will forgive my truthful summation, can say that, if I were an advocator of birth-control, nothing mentioned in your article would make me change my convictions. Your main thesis is that birth-control is against the natural law. This seems irrelevant in that so many natural laws are violated, as, for example, by cesarian operations, dehydrating foods, using drugs, etc. Why such concern about this one? You seem carried away when you reduce birth-prevention to adultery and prostitution. If a couple has eight children I see no reason for condemning them for using birth-control. You also compare birth-control with lying and stealing, but these sins hurt or endanger the people concerned, but birth-control is good for all concerned. Why does the Catholic Church oppress science, which has discovered such wonderful things as birth-control for the benefit of everyone?

M. F. P."

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Alas, this girl or woman has been taken in by practically every one of the muddled clichés and amoral arguments of modern secularism. It is doubtful that a long dissertation on each of the points she brings up would convince her now, since she starts with such confused notions about natural laws, the "benefits" that come from sin, and the glories of "science." All these objections have been answered hundreds of times, and the answers have convinced and converted thousands of humble, God-fearing, truth-seeking individuals. This one has taken her stand against God, His Church, and the dictates of reason, and on the side of what she thinks is "science." She needs prayers.

The editors

Philadelphia, Pa.

"Your July article on birth-control was the best and most logical discussion I ever read on the subject. I often have occasion to discuss such subjects with others. So many couples (otherwise devout) do not comply with God's law on birth-control that one wonders how many people will be saved. Your articles are so consoling without parting with principles that they are welcome over and over.

J. A. S."

It is indeed true that a great many Catholics have rebelled against God and His Church in regard to the duties of marriage. That is one reason for Catholic magazines like THE LIGUORIAN to show them the folly of their sins and inspire them to conversion from sin.

The editors

St. Louis, Mo.

"I was profoundly shocked by your article in the September issue in which you advocated corporal punishment as a means of exacting obedience from children. I have been a teacher for only a few years but I have never known a classroom situation that required more than ordinary human kind-

ness and understanding. The philosophy of John Dewey may be lacking in morality (as understood by the Church) but at least it has banished from the classroom much of the medievalism that characterized school life fifty years ago. I regard THE LIGUORIAN as one of the finest magazines I know, and I respect its intelligent approach to daily problems, but this reactionary article begins to raise doubts in my mind.

J. W. F."

It is in the Bible itself that the proverb is found, "He that spareth the rod hateth his son; but he that loveth him correcteth him betimes." (Proverbs 13/24) The use of the terms "medievalism" and "reactionary" for a discussion of this question, which was intended to be more tentative and questioning than final and authoritative, indicates a tendency toward a closing of the mind on a problem that we think is still worthy of discussion, with pros and cons, warnings and distinctions, all given due stress.

The editors

Ashtabula, O.

"I was shocked by the lack of logic revealed by the author of the article 'On Whipping Children.' Please send the rest of my subscription to some mission or poor person, but not to me. Such *ex-cathedra* pronouncements are not good for my blood pressure. 'Whipping cannot be bad in itself,' says the author! This statement from a magazine that should preach love, love of God and of one's fellowman! And don't give me any of that guff about the punishment being administered for the recipient's own good. Americans, as you say, are smart, much smarter than those who thought up cute little variations of punishment like keel-hauling, drawing and quartering, boiling in oil, etc. All in the name of loving correction, of course.

D. R. C."

We are sorry we disturbed this former reader's sensibilities and blood pressure.

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Corporal punishment of children, as an academic or practical subject of discussion, is surely not to be placed in the category of the "rack and the rope." Even mighty minds like that of St. Thomas discussed it objectively.

The editors

Kansas City, Mo.

"Why did you include slapping as O.K. for punishing children? God made our heads very vital and sensitive, and He did not intend it to be used for punishment. I really don't think any parent would agree to making slapping lawful, no matter how carefully the teachers were weeded. Whipping children where God made them tough is different.

N. M. G."

A slap can be a mere token, or it can be a dangerous blow. The bishop slaps a child when he confirms it, but it is with a tiny tap on the cheek. In the same way corporal punishment might often serve its purpose if it were but a token.

The editors

Milwaukee, Wis.

"As I have been taught in Catholic schools and believe today, a Pope is not speaking 'ex-cathedra' when he writes an encyclical. Is this true? If it is true, the subjects treated in an encyclical are debatable, and we Catholics are not obliged to believe the Pope's particular personal viewpoint whatsoever. When the Pope writes an encyclical, he is speaking as a man and not as the Vicar of Christ, and he is fallible. So when your authors, in quoting a Pope's encyclical, imply that the authority of the Church is behind them in their views on labor vs. management, I cannot agree with them unless the Pope is infallible on matters other than faith and morals. There are two sides to every question and it seems to me that a Catholic magazine pledged to truth, justice, democracy and religion, should in all decency de-

vote space to both sides of an issue. For over a year I have read nothing but pro-labor articles in THE LIGUORIAN. I challenge you, therefore, to write articles on both sides of the labor-management question, and to speak out as forcefully for management as for labor and thereby to represent all Catholics instead of some. Please print this letter and use my name if you wish.

Mrs. W. H. B., Jr."

The encyclicals of Popes cannot be brushed aside by the blunt statement; "Popes are not infallible when they write encyclicals; therefore I can hold the opposite of what a Pope teaches in an encyclical." It is true that a Pope rarely speaks ex cathedra in an encyclical (now and then one does); but he does speak as the supreme teacher of the faithful, with special guidance from the Holy Spirit, and Catholics, though not bound to believe an encyclical as a matter of faith, are bound to give reverent attention and submission to what the Pope says in an encyclical. Nor can the encyclicals on social justice be brushed aside as dealing with something outside faith and morals; they deal with the supremely moral question of justice, and point out evils, on the part of both capital and labor, that Catholics must campaign against. We try to be (no doubt with poor success at times) not pro-labor, but pro-justice, hammering away at such evils as the Popes pointed out in the organization of society.

The editors

Chicago, Ill.

"I was appalled at the advice you gave in the September LIGUORIAN to that foolish woman who desired to marry a colored man. I do not think much of a Christian woman, to say nothing of a Catholic, who would subject her children to such humiliation. Our Blessed Mother has not seen fit to bless my own marriage with any children, but if there were any possibility that a child of mine would marry a colored

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person I would thank her from the bottom of my heart for keeping me childless.

Mrs. A. N."

We grieve to say it, but this well-intentioned Catholic woman reveals how deeply racial prejudice has taken root in Christian hearts. She obviously believes that the colored are inferior, second-rate human beings, or she would not go so far as to prefer childlessness to the remote possibility that any child of hers (and God's) might marry a colored person. As we said in our article, there are many strong practical reasons against interracial marriage, but not one of them may be based on contempt for the colored.

The editors

Florham Park, N. J.

"I am not renewing my subscription to THE LIGUORIAN because it appears to me to be a magazine for the common herd. Quite necessary, I admit, but I prefer one on a little higher plane.

C. R. Q."

THE LIGUORIAN is indeed directed primarily to average people whom we do not look upon as "the common herd," but as millions of individuals with immortal souls destined for heaven. We are always happy to direct those who want scholarly and scientific Catholic reading matter to publications that specialize in such. We pray that such are able to solve correctly all the day-to-day human problems that are raised in THE LIGUORIAN.

The editors

Chicago, Ill.

"I am very happy with THE LIGUORIAN. Naturally, your articles concerning the problems of married life interest me greatly. I have one question, though. I have heard and read (from Catholic sources) so many different interpretations of what is right and wrong about the use of rhythm that I am confused. My husband and I would like a really definite article on this

subject. We are only thirty years old and our doctor advised us to avoid pregnancy for a time. Does this mean that total abstinence is our only recourse?

Anon."

Many of the problems concerning the use of rhythm and abstinence in marriage have been treated in THE LIGUORIAN, and have been gathered into a 25-cent volume entitled "For Wives and Husbands Only" by The Liguorian Pamphlet Office. If one is sure of having an objective reason for using rhythm for a time its use is not sinful. If one has doubts about one's reason, the advice of a confessor should be sought. It is impossible to lay down general rules that will cover every individual case, and that is why there seems to be confusion concerning the matter.

The editors

Billings, Montana

"THE LIGUORIAN is tops. I feel sure it will help me to convert my pagan husband. How wise the Church is in frowning on mixed marriages! I have a good husband and we love each other dearly, but may I be disloyal for a moment to urge you to keep right on advising young people against mixed marriages. They are a heavy cross at times. He goes to church with me on Sunday, but parental influence keeps him from asking for baptism. Please say a prayer for his conversion.

F. E. W."

This is an old story. Before marriage it seems easy to find happiness with a pagan partner; after marriage the crosses become heavier each year unless union of mind and heart in religion can be attained. We pray for all who are carrying such crosses.

The editors

Winter Park, Fla.

"It is a pleasure to renew my subscription. . . . I feel I have a special claim to your magazine, because it was one of your issues that helped me come back to the

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Church and the sacraments after leaving it because of divorce and remarriage. Then, in the July issue, 'Anon' writes of her invalid marriage and decision to live apart and pray for the day when she can be truly married. Her situation is like mine, and I feel that God was especially good to me to keep me alive till I came back to Him. If He wants 'us' some day to live together, we will. Meanwhile THE LIGUORIAN helps me say 'Fiat' and to live from day to day in a more prayerful way.

R. E. F."

This is further encouragement for those who have a difficult decision to make for the love of Christ and their souls. May THE LIGUORIAN help many such.

The editors

Brooklyn, N. Y.

"This is the first opportunity I had to write to you in regard to the excellent article in the August issue, 'Can Single Women Be Happy?' God love you for that article. It clothes the thoughts of my own heart in words. You see, I am one of the single women you were writing about, and believe me, through God's grace and the knowledge of His love I am serenely happy. Each day at Mass I will ask the Blessed Mother and her Son to bless you and your work.

A. McG."

We are grateful to the many other correspondents who have written letters like the above.

The editors

Brooklyn, N. Y.

"Thank God for your wonderful work. If I had no money to eat I would get the subscription price of THE LIGUORIAN. When my husband went astray, leaving me with our twelve-year-old son, I thought the whole world had come to an end. You see, we both loved him so, but THE LIGUORIAN gave me the lift I needed to keep from falling into the depths of despair. The

worst is over now, and I can go on living like a normal human being, working and praying for him as well as ourselves. Each issue of THE LIGUORIAN seems to have a message for me, and I know God will be always at my side. I am glad you decided not to add pictures. It does not need them.

M. S."

Oswego, N. Y.

"May I take the time to add my praise and thanks to that of others for your magazine? It does for my mind and soul what a thick steak does for my body. Would you say a word to your readers about the powerful intercession of St. Jude? I first discovered him some years ago and he has helped me so much that I agree wholeheartedly with his title, 'saint of the impossible.' He has been especially powerful in helping me out of a tangle of financial problems. I promised him that I would write this tribute to THE LIGUORIAN but did not promise him that you would print it. . . That is up to you.

Mrs. J. D."

Liguori and THE LIGUORIAN owe much to St. Jude. It was while one of the Redemptorists now forming the community at Liguori was preaching a novena in honor of St. Jude and praying publicly that a site might be found for the establishment of the new Liguori, that the present beautiful Liguori property was unexpectedly found. We join our thanks to those of the above correspondent.

The editors

Fresno, Calif.

"I wonder if you really know how well liked your LIGUORIAN is? As it is. No photographs. It's so unique. Don't change it. There are sixteen in our family and seven of us adults always read it thoroughly. It is the most popular Catholic magazine in our home.

Miss B. L."

Pre-Marriage Clinic

Donald F. Miller

Do Past Sins Make Marriage a Risk?

Problem: I have been going with a young man for over a year and hope to marry him in the near future. He is not a Catholic but is going to become one before we get married. My one problem is that he has told me that before he met me, he fell into sin with somebody else. He felt that I should know about this and should consider whether it would make me unwilling to marry him. His actions toward me have always been those of a gentleman, and he knows that I would not have it any other way. I have been praying to the Blessed Mother every day to help me make a right decision. Shall I continue to go out with him and forget about his past mistakes? Or would I be taking a chance in so doing?

Solution: There are two very good indications that your boy friend's repentance for his past sins is quite sincere. The first is the fact that he has made no sinful advances to you, and has humbly confessed his past sins to you in an obvious spirit of self-reproach. A man who admits that he has done wrong and who shows that he does not intend to do it again even in keeping company when temptations so easily arise, has much that is good in him.

The second indication that is promising is the fact that he is willing to take instructions in the Catholic religion and to become a Catholic. It is advisable that you try to make certain that he does receive a good course of instructions, and that he becomes a Catholic out of sincere conviction. You can have much to do with that by your encouragement, your readiness to explain your own faith, and your insistence that the most important thing in life and in marriage is solid convictions about religion and the loyal practice of all that the true religion demands.

If it becomes clear to you that he is sincerely seeking the truth in the Catholic religion, and ready wholeheartedly to embrace it when he finds it, I do not think you would be taking too great a chance in marrying him. Repentance and conversion make him a good prospect for a husband.

How to Practice Charity

Quotations and anecdotes from real life, designed to foster practices that should be second nature to the Christian.

John P. Schaefer

IT HAS been our custom in these articles to introduce and conclude them with reflections and meditative material. But we think that the following stories and incidents need no introduction. Nor do they need any conclusion, save, perhaps, the suggestion: "Go and do likewise, according to your means."

The Princess Eugenia, sister of the king of Sweden, had taken a deep interest in a new hospital. With royal generosity she had disposed of her diamonds in order to raise funds for its completion. While visiting the hospital, on one occasion, after its completion, one of the patients wept tears of gratitude in her presence. The princess was forced to exclaim:

"Ah! Now I see my diamonds again."

A poor Irish woman some years ago went to a priest in America and asked him to forward to Ireland some help for those who were suffering from the famine.

"How much can you spare?" she was asked.

"I have \$100 saved, and I can spare that sum."

The priest endeavored to remonstrate with her, exclaiming that the gift was too much for her slender means. But nothing which he said could change her mind.

"It will do me good to know that I have been able to help a little," she said. "And I shall be able to rest hap-

pier when I think of all the poor families I have saved from hunger and death."

The priest then took the money she offered, but as he did so his eyes filled with tears.

"Now, what is your name," he asked, "that I may have it published?"

"My name? Don't mind that, Father. Just send them the help. God knows my name and that is quite enough."

In India they tell the following fable of the Golden Palace. Sultan Ahmed was a great king. He sent Yakoob, the most skillful of his builders, with vast sums of money, to erect in the mountains of snow the most splendid palace ever seen. Yakoob went to the place and found a great famine among the people, and many of them dying. Instead of building the palace he took the money of the king and all of his own and distributed it to feed the starving people. When Ahmed came at length to see his palace, and found none, in his anger he cast Yakoob into prison, exclaiming:

"Tomorrow you shall die, for you have robbed the king."

But that night Ahmed had a dream. There came to him one who said:

"Follow me."

Up from the earth they soared, until they were at heaven's gate. They entered, and, behold, there stood a palace of pure gold, more brilliant than the sun and vaster far than any palace of earth.

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"What palace is this?" asked Ahmed.

His guide answered: "This is the palace of merciful deeds, built for thee by Yakoob, the wise. Its glory shall endure when all earth's things have passed away."

A farmer, a good Catholic, but somewhat close, whose barns were well stocked with successful crops and whose pigs and sheep were selling at an excellent price, was reciting the customary night prayers with his family.

"And, O heavenly Father," he read from the book, "assist the poor and relieve their pressing needs, etc. etc.."

After the prayers were finished, his little daughter came up to him saying:

"Papa, I wish I had all your corn and wheat."

"Why, little one? What would you do with it?"

"I'd hear your prayer immediately."

A benevolent man once discovered that a family was in great distress. He gave his clerk \$25 and said:

"Give it to them in a way becoming their station. Do it graciously but do not mention the name of the giver."

"Yes," answered the clerk. "I will do it first thing in the morning."

"No," exclaimed the benefactor, "do it tonight. Who knows the importance to those sad hearts of a night's sleep unhaunted by the worry of want."

"Father, you have told us a great many beautiful things about heaven," a parishioner once said, "but you haven't told us where it is."

"I have just come from the house you see there on the side of the hill," replied the priest. "In that house is a poor member of my flock. She is ill

with a fever. Her two little children are also ill, and there is hardly a bit of fuel or food in the house. Now, if you will go down town and buy fifty dollars worth of provisions, clothing and fuel and take them to her and say: 'My friend, I have brought you these things in the name of God,' you will be permitted to behold a bit of heaven before you leave that dwelling."

"For all you can hold in your cold, dead hand,

Is what you have given away."

Joaquin Miller.

A poor woman came one day to offer a mite to the priest for the rebuilding of his church. The priest refused to accept it, saying that she was poor herself and needed the money.

"I am poor," she replied, "but am I not the daughter of a great king and the heir of his kingdom?"

A group of boys was taunting a poor little bare-footed urchin one day, making fun of his Christian faith. They said to him:

"If God really loves you, why doesn't He take better care of you? Why doesn't He tell someone to send you a pair of shoes?"

The lad seemed puzzled for a moment. Then, with tears rushing to his eyes, he replied:

"I think he does tell somebody, but they are not listening."

May we ask you now to reread the preceding stories and incidents, to think over them for but a moment, and to apply to each this very practical conclusion of the Master of charity:

"Go you and do likewise.

For whatsoever you have done to the least of my little ones, you have done it unto Me."

Happenings in Rome

Monthly round-up of significant events in the capital of Christendom.

Christopher D. McEnniry

Description of A Parish

The Pope (who is the spiritual Father of ten hundred thousand parishes throughout the world) excused himself for giving so much attention to one parish when he addressed the parishioners of St. Saba who came in their hundreds to ask for a blessing on the twentieth anniversary of the founding of their parish. The venerable church of St. Saba, which we remember seeing empty and abandoned in a sparsely populated district of Rome a half-century ago, was made a parish church twenty years ago and is now the center of a thriving and enthusiastic young parish.

The Pope appealed to the fact that these people belonged to his own diocese of Rome and that they were fellow-Romans, citizens like himself of that eternal city. He excused himself on these grounds for giving so much time to one parish: but none can read his discourse without seeing that he had in mind, not only the faithful grouped about the historic Roman church of St. Saba, but the members of every parish in the world.

"Do you desire," he asked, "to enter a contest of holy rivalry with other parishes? Then perforce must you all, priests and people, consolidate into an efficient and energetic body bent on *making Christ the life of every soul.*"

That is his idea of a true parish — one that aims at making Christ the life of every soul. He praised all their parish activities: their school, their dramatic club, their sports, their motion pictures. But what he singled out as

worthy of special praise was their record of 120,000 Communion for the past year.

For Catholic activities, wholesome recreation, even the very schools, are not, he insisted, the center of the parish. The center of the parish, from which life should flow and to which it should return, is the church with its tabernacle and its confessional. Unite together, he pleaded, into one compact family, let nobody stand aloof. Souls are suffering from spiritual asphyxia. They have ceased to breathe the breath of prayer. Unite together, unite, and use every holy strategy to induce them to offer to their God a daily prayer, however brief, and thus restore their breathing. All can participate in this "first aid" to suffocating souls: children can win over father and mother, the maiden can win her fiancé, the sister her brother.

But, besides breath, a living being must have nourishment. By word and example encourage frequent Communion. If you would know the living members of your parish, count, not those walking in the parish processions, not those cheering the parish teams, but those kneeling at the parish altar to receive the Bread of Life.

Become one family. In a parish family there should never be seen glaring contrasts between extreme wealth and extreme misery. If your brother is hungry, do not allow him to languish awaiting the slow and intricate working of "organized" charity. Share your loaf with him while it can help.

Enlist the cooperation of every

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member of the parish — especially of our dear young men. Too often they stand all the day idle because nobody has had the inspiration to paint before their eyes a vision of the fight to be fought and the victories to be won. Too often you underestimate their dormant powers. Bid them raise their sights — aspire to great achievements. You will find them more prompt to face heroic sacrifices than to take part in mediocre tasks.

More About the Parish:

The Pope has very much at heart the fundamental requirements for a genuine Catholic parish. He spoke of them again in a letter to the Bishops of Canada:

“The parish as the basic social cell.”

In order to devote intensive study to this topic the bishops of Canada called two meetings, one for the English-speaking, one for the French-speaking. The Pope took advantage of the occasion to instruct his pro-secretary of state to send them an identical letter, one copy in English, the other in French. We quote from this letter:

“What therefore is a parish? It is the smallest portion of the one and universal flock entrusted to Peter by Our Lord. Under the authority of a conscientious priest, who has received from his own bishop the responsibility of the care of souls, it is, in the Church of Christ, the first community conforming to man's requirements in such a way that the shepherd may know his sheep, and the sheep their shepherd. A definite territory determines its limits within the diocese, so that the parish is fixed to a certain portion of land; it is inserted within the local traditions and within definite boundaries. In the very heart of this territory the parochial church is to be seen, with its towering steeple, its baptistery, its confessional,

its altar, its tabernacle, standing as the symbol of the unity of the faithful and the center of their spiritual life.

“For it is important to remember, the parish is first of all a center of religious life and of missionary radiation; those who are in the truest sense members of the parish are those who are found at the foot of the altar when the priest distributes the Bread of Life.

“The parish priest is not the chief of the community, he is rather the servant of the people, having received spiritual authority over his sheep only to be, in their midst, the dispenser of the Mysteries of God so that ‘they may have life, and have it more abundantly.’” To make Jesus known, loved and served by all: that is, according to the very words of the Holy Father, the aim of all parochial life. And His Holiness does not hesitate to insist: “All other things are to be valued inasmuch and in the measure that they contribute to the realization of the aim which the Church wishes to obtain. The field of sport, the theatre, the motion picture installation, even the school . . . all very useful and often necessary institutions — do not constitute the center of the parish. The center is the church — the center is called ‘the life of souls’ — it is called Jesus. Now it is exactly such a parish, a true living and active cell of Christ's Body, which is called upon, if it is to be true to its own religious mission, to play a role of primary importance in the regeneration of modern society . . .

“Though the parish is indeed principally ordained for the Kingdom of God, it should, for all that, know how to interest itself in the institutions and everyday realities which condition the development of the individual person and of civil life. The need and benefits of Christian social action require no explanation, and the parish, very evi-

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dently, ought to collaborate in it. But let us always take careful note of the fact that most of the great social problems, which Catholics must face from now on, both in regard to their particular nature and their solutions, extend for beyond the restricted organization of the parish. . . . Here a narrow spirit would be harmful . . .

"The parish is a family, of which the priest is the father, where no one is a stranger to the others, where, as far as possible, the joy and the sadness of each are alike the joy and sadness of all. . . . It is above all the field of action for charitable and social initiatives which supplement the inevitable limits of official organizations. We have in mind the poor who have no bread, the sick who are without medicine or who lack the comfort of a kind Christian word, those who are discouraged with their existence . . .

"In our tragically divided society does not the parish function as a school of peace and of social justice? . . . Its spirit is that of the peace of Christ to which we have been called to form one Body. But it is also a spirit of justice, which tolerates neither the shameless contrast of wealth and misery among the members of the parish community nor the hypocrisy of a fraternity in church, that would not have for its effect that of creating at work more fraternal social relations. Indeed, does not the parish altar, the center around which the most sacred bonds of union are formed, invite each and every one who comes before it to make an examination of conscience in regard to his duties of justice towards his brethren? . . . It is at the foot of the altar of sacrifice, around the pulpit from which comes the word of truth, that the Sunday rest takes on its full

meaning, a cessation from labor, repose of the body and of the soul. . . . It is not easy to find words to praise sufficiently the parish initiatives directed at offering, to the young people especially, a means of satisfying their justified desires for culture or recreation; but above all Sunday is a day consecrated to the worship of God in that communal and social form that is due Him (the parish Mass)."

For Children

Already in 1927 the late Pope, Pius XI, had received the "Italian Children of Catholic Action" placed under the special care of the "Italian Women of Catholic Action." He had said to them: "You form the newest, the most delicate, the most beautiful, the most promising branch of the mighty tree of Catholic Action."

This year the reigning Pope, Pius XII, received them again, praised them for their loyalty and for the large numbers who had become priests or members of religious orders or intelligent, God-fearing citizens keenly interested in good government. "Continue, dear children," he said, "to be pure and strong — pure as the lily, strong as the oak emblazoned upon your banner. Continue, by your good example, to preach powerfully to other children who do not receive in the home or in the school the training necessary to make them good Christians and good citizens."

Flying Saucers

Even the *Osservatore Romano* has its account of flying saucers. In one night they were seen in four different parts of Morocco: twenty miles south of Marrakesh, in Taroudent, in Casablanca, and near Rabat.

To ease another's heart, is to forget one's own.

Points of Friction

Louis G. Miller

Divided Faith in the Family

A more or less common situation which can lead to a great deal of friction is that which finds Catholics living with non-Catholics in the same household. We refer, for instance, to the Catholic convert who must still live with his or her Protestant family, or the Catholic partner in a mixed marriage, where in addition non-Catholic in-laws may be part of the household.

We have reference here, of course, primarily to the friction that can arise specifically from the difference of religion, and we approach the problem only from the standpoint of the Catholic involved.

Those who are involved in such a situation often find many causes of annoyance. Sometimes the non-Catholics, through ignorance or prejudice, are very much opposed to the Catholic view, and they may allow their opposition to take the form of ridicule and snide remarks; they may seize upon any occasion to belittle the teachings of the Church. This obviously can lead to unpleasant arguments and loss of temper on both sides. Or it may be that the complete coldness and lack of sympathy towards what, to the Catholic, constitutes the most important realities of life are the cause of difficulty and unhappiness.

Now it would be humanly impossible to avoid all friction in such circumstances. Catholics are bound not to compromise their faith in its essential principles, even though peace in the family be at stake. Christ predicted such conflicts when He said: "A man's enemies shall be they of his own household." To compromise the faith in essentials is to deny it, and to deny the faith is to deny Christ Himself.

But there are many occasions when idle, useless argument can be avoided, and a determined effort must be made by the Catholic to avoid it. It is useless, for instance, to carry on an argument when it is quite apparent that it is generating more heat than light.

While calmly and fearlessly fulfilling his duties as a Catholic, he should not go out of his way to flaunt the faith without regard for charity. Let him be patient and tolerant with those who, perhaps through no fault of their own, see everything that concerns the Catholic Church through a mist of prejudice.

The effect of this calmness, charity and patience will be in the end to win the grudging approval of others. As for the ripening of the fruit, the Catholic can safely leave that to the sunshine of God's grace, knowing that his good example has been an important factor in the process.



Sideglances

By *The Bystander*

The bystander feels obligated, despite distaste for the subject, to say something about the latest Kinsey report and the national reaction to it over the past few months. As everybody knows, comments on it have swarmed over the front and inside pages of most of the popular magazines; they have taken up columns in most of the newspapers; and book-stores, department stores and even drug-stores have put on special advertising campaigns to make as much money out of the wild commotion over the book on the sexual lives of women as possible. It is scarcely possible that the harm that can result from all this will be much reduced by what we shall write; but even the least reduction of that harm will be all to the good. We write, not from an ivory tower viewpoint, nor from a monastic cell into which little knowledge of the world is permitted to seep. We write as a priest, confessor, missionary, teacher and adviser with twenty-five years of experience. Where Kinsey and his lieutenants have talked to five or six thousand women about their problems, we have talked to tens of thousands. We present that fact, not as a boast, but as an answer to any objection that we are leading from ignorance.

Kinsey's handling of his book and the publishers' and public's reaction to it, represent the most amazing surrender to titillating curiosity and to the commercialization of prurience that our generation has known. Curiosity concerning the intimate sex lives of others comes natural to human beings; it is one of the clearest proofs we possess of the downward tendency in our nature whose only adequate explanation is original sin. It is not such a proof because curiosity for knowledge is in itself bad, but

because curiosity for this special kind of knowledge, when unnecessarily indulged, invariably leads to powerful temptations and often to sin. There is no conceivable scientific reason for inviting the public at large to hear the sex-confessions of six thousand women. But Kinsey knew that thousands would want to hear those confessions. And he played on their curiosity like a snake-charmer getting a rise out of a cobra. Instead of sending copies of his book to the newspaper and magazine editors, he first invited them to come to his quarters at Indiana University and to examine the galley proofs there. They were not permitted to take copies outside the rooms where they were kept. They were invited to read, to drool, to slap their knees like rouses at a burlesque show, and then to write come-on stories for public consumption. And how they rushed to Bloomington to carry out Kinsey's plan for heating up public curiosity to a conflagration!

In answer to the charge of playing on the most dangerous form of human curiosity, Dr Kinsey and his many publicizers are quick to brandish the catchword "science." The doctor himself is even held up as a kind of martyr to science, through accounts enhanced by pictures of the tremendous number of man-hours he and his associates sacrificed to the cause of interviewing individuals. But the mountain surely labored in this instance to produce a mouse. It may indeed be a prodigious job to interview almost six thousand women concerning their sex lives, but it is a more prodigious feat to present that number as an adequate picture of forty or fifty million. This is especially untrustworthy because of the individual characteristics of the less than six thousand

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who are willing to testify on so personal a subject. But even granting that there is some merit in the conclusions drawn from six thousand confessions, what are those conclusions? Chiefly, that there is a considerable number of fornicators, adulterers and other types of sinners in the world. Whether that number is one out of four, or one out of six, or one out of ten has little scientific value except on the vicious assumption that the higher the percentage of sinners there are, the less one should fear sin.

It is in the vicious assumptions, express or implicit, and the immoral conclusions, that the Kinsey report does its greatest damage. Three of these have been played up especially in the popular magazines. The first is the basic assumption that what is right and wrong may be judged by what a certain percentage of men and women do. "What is often done is rightly done," thus becomes a kind of axiom to assist individuals to stifle the voice of their consciences and to disregard what their reason tells them to be eternal moral laws. The second is the notion that pre-marital experimentation in sex would seem to be good because it assures success in married life. This, if accepted by very many, would open the flood-gates wide to a tide of immorality and sensuality that would end by destroying marriage, the home, the nation and all civilization. The third notion that the popularizers of Kinsey have stressed is his conclusion that religion is one of the chief obstacles to good sexual adjustment in life. One can understand how this would come out of Kinsey's report, since religion teaches that there are limitations imposed on the use of sex by a fixed and eternal law of God, whereas Kinsey shows no awareness of any law other than one that can be defined in terms of custom or what many people actually do. It can be granted that the limitations on the use of sex commanded by God are sometimes misinterpreted by individuals

into an irrational fear of the use of sex even in marriage. But these are exceptions, and they are not authentic examples of the effect of religious teaching concerning sex. They are rather examples of the effect of false religious teaching and training.

What a spectacular difference there is between the assumptions, findings and conclusions of the Kinsey reports on sex, and the teachings of Christ and His Church on this same subject! We are convinced that just seeing them juxtaposed will turn many a mature person who has had little opportunity to study religion away from the former and toward the latter, and toward the whole truth of which the Christian attitude toward sex is but a part. The Church, representing the voice of Christ, teaches that sex is a sacred and a holy thing, but that its use is subject to a natural and eternal law made by the Creator of man. It teaches that children, adolescents and those preparing for marriage should be instructed in God's law concerning sex according to their need. It teaches that idle curiosity for knowledge in this matter that is outside one's needs is a great danger and an occasion of sin. It teaches that even the most necessary knowledge is never enough by itself to prevent one from misusing sex, but that prayer, prudence and surrender to God's will are even more necessary than knowledge. It teaches that every deliberate indulgence in the pleasures of sex outside the sanctified state of marriage for which they were intended is a grave violation of God's law and a choosing of hell over heaven. The Church knows far better than Kinsey that, despite the clarity of God's law, many individuals will fall into sin, especially today when so many incentives to sin, including such as are offered by Kinsey reports, are combined with the weakness of fallen human nature. For those who fall, her confessionals are open at all times, in which forgiveness and cleanness may be purchased at the price of humble admission

of guilt and determination never to be unclean again. For those who have not fallen, she offers her sacraments, insistence on prayer, wise practical advice, as means of keeping themselves "unspotted by the world." Let the conscience of any individual, hitherto religious or not, speak out, and

it will confirm these teachings of Christ and His Church. Nay more, it will see in them the only safeguard of marriage and the home, the only basis on which society and nations can survive, and the only principles on which individual souls can be saved from hell.

Biblical Problem

Edward A. Mangan

Were the Ten Plagues Miraculous?

Problem: In regard to the ten plagues in Egypt I have heard it said that there were no miracles involved, that the ten plagues were merely natural phenomena. Is this true?

Answer: This is a very wide statement. It must be qualified in many ways.

a. The tenth plague was certainly not a natural phenomenon. Moses predicted that on one and the same night the first-born of every Egyptian family, even the first-born of their flocks, would die, and he warned the Israelities that unless they sprinkled their door with the blood of the paschal lamb, this would happen in their families. All this actually happened. Certainly there is nothing about this plague that does not savor of the miraculous.

b. In regard to the other nine plagues, e.g., the Nile water changing into blood, the frogs, mosquitoes, gnats, cattle murrain, boils, hail, locusts and darkness, it may be said that these had a certain amount of the natural about them in so far as they had parallels in natural phenomena proper to Egypt, occurring occasionally in the Delta.

However the Biblical plagues do not represent cases of merely natural phenomena because: 1) Moses did more than the magicians of Pharaoh. For instance, they could cause strange phenomena to happen but they could not call an immediate halt to what they did as he always could. 2) All the plagues were predicted by Moses. He predicted their start, their precise nature and their end. 3) They began immediately at his word and ceased precisely when and as he foretold. 4) There is no record of such phenomena in such terrible intensity in all the history of Egypt.

So therefore we state again that it is a very wide statement to say that the plagues were natural phenomena. God made use of natural phenomena in nine of the plagues—we state this as probable—and intensified them greatly to show His power over all nature. Then when nothing else could move Pharaoh, God worked the astounding miracle of the tenth plague to force his stubborn will to let the Israelities go free.



Catholic Anecdotes

Last Words

Cardinal Bertram of Breslau once wrote a pastoral letter containing the following anecdote:

A working-man was lying on the operating table in a German hospital prepared to undergo a serious operation for a growth on his tongue. The surgeon said:

"If there is anything that you would like to say, you had better say it now, for after the operation is completed you will never be able to speak again."

The man thought for a moment, and then said:

"Praised be Jesus Christ!"

"Praised for evermore!" answered the surgeon, and gave the signal for the anesthetist to begin his task.

One More Trip

A famous Scotch explorer, when he had grown old, was entertaining some young people by telling them stories of the exciting moments in his life. He told them how he had shot a tiger just as it was about to spring at him; how he had been saved from shipwreck after he had been afloat for two days in a small boat; how he had watched the sunrise from a towering snow-clad peak in the Himalayas; and many other extraordinary tales.

"But," he continued, "I'm expecting to have another thrill soon, bigger and better than any of these."

His hearers wondered, for they supposed that his exploring days were over.

"Are you, then, planning another journey, sir?"

"No," he replied, "I was thinking of the first five minutes after death."

Perfect in God's Eyes

St. Francis de Sales was having an argument with a friend one day, trying to convince him that all the works of God are perfect. As they were talking a hunchback passed by.

"Look at that poor man," exclaimed the friend sarcastically, as soon as the hunchback was unable to hear his words. "A deformed man — can you call *him* perfect?"

"Certainly," replied the bishop, beaming pleasantly. "Why not? Perhaps he is a *perfect* hunchback!"

Lenin's Lesson to Russia

Now that Stalin has passed on we are reminded of a story carried by the Catholic Press in 1924, states *The Cowl*. An unidentified German priest reported to *L'Osservatore Romano* that he had known Lenin in Paris before the father of Russian Communism had seized control in Russia. They met frequently and became fast friends. Years later, a few months before Lenin's death in 1924, the priest went to Moscow and visited Lenin several times. No one but Lenin knew he was a priest.

The priest and the dictator talked about the Revolution. They also talked about the Church. And, according to the German priest, Lenin spoke of "the great moral strength of Catholicism." All else might fail, but the Church would live on. "It is," the dictator said, "invincible."



Pointed Paragraphs

Purgatory

What is purgatory?

Purgatory is a prison. Prisons are seldom resorts to which men repair who are looking for space to roam around and stretch out after a long period of confinement in the city. Prisons confine. They take away liberty. They circumscribe the movements of the body. They even put chains upon the spirit insofar as they deprive it of the opportunity to contemplate the beauty and enchantment of the universe existing everywhere outside the prison walls. Prisons are all the more odious because man is created to be free.

The prison of purgatory is worse than an earthly prison. Purgatory takes away the freedom that a man in the deepest aspirations of his soul has been looking for from the moment of his birth. It means transference to a completely confining prison at the very time a man expected to be free from all prisons.

Probably there are no walls in purgatory, no bars or iron balls at the ends of chains. But the confinement is there nevertheless. A man cannot get up and go where he wants to go. He is not able to open the windows if the weather becomes too hot. He is fixed in the place of his confinement until his sentence has been served.

Purgatory is an exile. The chief pain of exile is the separation from relatives and friends. Soldiers during the war looked upon their term of service as a time of exile. They were not allowed to bring their wife, their children or their parents to the battlefield with

them. This caused them their greatest sorrow. They did not talk very much amongst themselves about the danger of being killed, about the inconvenience of living in the midst of mud and snow and cold. But they talked all the time about the ones whom they had left behind when they went to war.

The exile of purgatory is worse than any earthly exile. The suffering soul is not only deprived of the consolation that it might have in association with loved ones, but it is also deprived of the company of God. Only after death does it realize that God is the only source of complete and everlasting happiness. And now God cannot be possessed. This is surely the sharpest of all the agonies that a man can suffer.

Purgatory is a place of pain. There is not much that we can say about this point because there is not much that we know about it. It is probable that there is fire in purgatory. But Our Lord never said for certain that there is. However, if there is not fire, there is something just as bad as fire. There will be the equivalent of vicious toothaches, stomachaches and backaches. And the aches will be worse than any ache that any human being felt before he died. We are pretty sure of that.

It is wise to avoid purgatory. They go to purgatory who die with unrepented venial sins on their soul, or who have not done enough penance to make up for their repented of and forgiven mortal sins. The best way to avoid purgatory is to stop committing venial sins and to undertake a program of penance to make up for the sins

that were committed in the past. That's all. Then the above-written paragraphs will have no meaning.

Haters of the Mass

One of the things that seems to irk Protestant pamphlet-writers more than anything else is the practice among Catholics of having Masses said for their beloved dead. What calls forth their fuming vituperation is the fact that a Catholic may make an offering of money to a priest on condition that he say one of his Masses for the intention of the offerer.

We have before us half a dozen leaflets and pamphlets put out by publishers of tracts lampooning this practice, some of them in the most scurrilous and vicious language. The intemperate spirit of the attacks is such as to make it doubtful that the minds of their writers are open to objective facts. Nevertheless, because Catholics are bound to hear them quoted at times, and, if they are not well informed themselves, may be influenced by them, it is good that some of the facts about Mass-offerings be set down.

1. The basic assumption in the mind of the tract-writers is that the Mass is a superstition, a sham, a made-up deception on the part of priests. . . . In the mind of Catholics the Mass is a fulfillment of the Saviour's own words to His priests: "As often as you do this you shall show the death of the Lord until He come." Moreover, for fifteen hundred years before the appearance of Protestantism in the world, the Mass was accepted by all Christians as exactly that — "the showing of the death of the Lord." It became a superstition only in the minds of the first Protestant founders in the sixteenth century.

2. What torments the tract-writers most is the fact that an offering of

money may be made to a priest on condition that he celebrate Mass for the donor. . . . But again, this practice has the sanction of the Bible and the backing of fifteen hundred years of acceptance among Christians before Protestantism arose, and of succeeding generations of Catholics since that time. St. Paul said: (I Corinthians, 9/13), "You know surely that those who do the temple's work live on the temple's revenues; that those who preside at the altar share the altar's offerings." No one doubted that this made offerings for Masses said pleasing to God until, fifteen hundred years after Christ, the founders of new religions destroyed the altars.

3. The impression is given by the tract-writers that Catholics are somehow forced to impoverish themselves by offering stipends to a priest for the saying of Masses for their intention. . . This is nonsense. Nothing is left more to the voluntary devotion of Catholics than the making of offerings to a priest who will say Mass for their intention. Catholics are even taught that if they really cannot afford to make offerings for Masses, God will not hold this against them, and that their first duty is to provide necessities for themselves and their families. Those who can afford it are taught that making such offerings is in reality but a giving back to God of what He gave to them.

So the Catholic, still believing that the Mass is what Christ said it was, "the showing of His death," that the priests of Christ are to live "by the offerings of the altar," that the denial of the value of the Mass and of the right of those who offer it "to live by the altar" is not only unscriptural but less than four hundred years old, will continue, when they are able to do so, to ask their priests "to show the death of the Lord," as the most power-

ful prayer that can be raised to God for their intentions.

Marriage Annulments Again

We have been asked a dozen times in recent weeks: "What is this business about the former mayor of New York, William O'Dwyer, getting an annulment from the Catholic Church of his marriage to Sloan Simpson? Is this a case in which the Church is going to favor prominent persons with a right to a second marriage after a valid first one?"

The question arises from the fact that the newspapers have repeatedly stated that a plea for annulment of their marriage on the part of these two prominent figures is in the hands of the Archbishop of Mexico City.

We do not know on what ground the plea has been made. But we do know this, and we urge all Catholics confidently to repeat it, that there will be no annulment handed down by the Catholic Church unless some provable fact or circumstance was present when O'Dwyer went through a marriage ceremony with Simpson that made it invalid as a marriage at that moment and ever afterward. Even if the case goes to the Roman Rota, the highest Catholic Tribunal in the world for judging about doubtful marriage cases, it is certain that nothing but the facts will influence a decision.

In the first half of 1952 the Roman Rota handed down 188 decisions on marriages appealed from 21 countries. Of these cases, 114 decisions were made upholding the validity of marriages that petitioners had cast doubts upon, while 74 decisions declared that the marriages in question were null and void.

But here are startling figures to prove that money and prominence have nothing to do with the decisions

rendered. Of the 188 petitions handled, 73 were carried through trials in the Roman Rota *without charge*, because the petitioners were not able, or declared themselves unable, to pay the court charges. The estimated cost to the Holy See of handling these 73 cases free of charge, was \$11,000. In 44 of these free trials, the decision was handed down that the marriage in question was valid; in 29 cases, the judgment of the court was that the marriage in question was null and void.

Thus, of the 115 cases in which the expenses of the court were paid by the petitioners, 70 decisions were handed down declaring the marriage that had been disputed to be valid. In only 45 cases in which the expenses were paid by the petitioners, did the latter receive a judgment that their marriage was null and void.

Anybody can see from this that if money and not facts bore any weight with the judges, far more than 45 of those who could and did pay for a Roman Rota trial would have got what they sought — a declaration that their marriage was invalid.

Guide for Soldiers

Avery P. Dulles, S.J., gives some good advice to Catholic young men who have been drafted into the armed forces and are about to be inducted. Mr. Dulles is the son of John Foster Dulles, secretary of state in President Eisenhower's cabinet; he became a Catholic in 1940; and he is now in training for the Jesuit priesthood. He spent four years as a naval officer in World War II.

After speaking of the dangers that a Catholic soldier or sailor must face almost twenty-four hours a day, from contact and close association with irreligious and immoral companions, he

sets down seven rules that will help him both to keep the faith and to preserve himself from moral taint. They are:

1. Make a retreat before departing for service.

2. Get together a good missal, a New Testament, a prayer book, a rosary, and a miraculous medal.

3. Keep contact while in service with at least one priest, religious, or Catholic teacher who is interested in your welfare and will be praying for you.

4. Have your family send you good pamphlets and a few subscriptions to the better Catholic periodicals and newspapers.

5. Wherever you are stationed, seek out other Catholic men who are also striving to be faithful to the commandments.

6. Do not divorce your Catholic principles from your military duties.

7. Above all, have complete and joyful confidence in God's loving providence for you.

These rules are contained in a public letter that Mr. Dulles wrote some time ago for service men. It is published by the America Press, 70 E. 45th St., New York 17, N.Y. Parents and friends of soldiers or sailors would do well to forward a copy to them.

Schools That Gave Up God

Not one Catholic school or college or university founded in the United States in the past 150 years is any less Catholic today than when it was founded. But see what has happened to most of the colleges which were founded by non-Catholics for religious purposes. Bishop Sheen, in his book, *Philosophies at War*, sums up the facts as follows:

"Harvard was founded in 1636 to save Churches from an illiterate min-

istry. William and Mary was founded in 1693 for the same purpose. Yale in 1701 declared its aim was to prepare young men for 'public employment both in Church and Civil State.' Columbia was established in 1753 with the chief objective 'to teach and engage children to know God in Jesus Christ.'

"Of the 119 colleges founded east of the Mississippi, 104 were Christian and all of them were primarily for Christian purposes. Of 246 founded by 1860, only 17 were state universities. The academy, the precursor of our modern high school, which had its rise about 1750 and its highest development in 1850, was definitely religious in character.

"Very few of these early colleges and universities have retained religion as an integral part of education. An investigation made years ago recalled that some colleges had reduced the number of students believing in God from one to five at entrance, to one in 20 at graduation."

This puts pretty clearly before parents the chance they have of seeing their children emerge from the once religious, now thoroughly secularistic colleges, as believers in God or, at least, as loyal Catholics. What parent is bold enough to believe that his son or daughter might be the one in twenty who would preserve some vestige of the true faith through such a schooling?

Old Spectacles for the Needy

There are two items of daily use which, once they have served their purpose for the user, present a problem as to their disposal. We haven't any immediate suggestion as to what can be done with the first of the two, i.e., used razor blades, unless it be to bury them in a deep hole. But for the second item, discarded spectacles, we

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can offer a very practical and charitable suggestion.

In almost every home where some members of the family wear glasses, the passing years, bringing with them repeated changes in lens prescriptions, together with new fashions in the type of frames used, witness an accumulation of old and discarded spectacles. Most people hesitate to throw them away. Even though they are utterly useless to the person whose vision has altered, it seems a pity to discard an item which originally cost a fair amount of money. Instead, these spectacles are relegated to the limbo of a bureau drawer, and the housewife, coming across them occasionally, says to herself: "If only they could be put to some use!"

An organization in New Jersey called "New Eyes for the Needy" has come up with a practical solution to the problem. Sponsored by the Short Hills Junior Service League, this volunteer, non-profit group collects old spectacles for re-distribution to the poor who are without funds to have an eye examination and to purchase glasses of their own.

That there are people in this cate-

gory should occasion no surprise. The St. Vincent de Paul men can tell you about it from their experience of visiting the poor in any given parish, and their testimony is corroborated by various other charitable organizations as well. Some people with poor vision simply cannot afford to go through the ordinary channels for attention to their eyes. If they can be helped by a donation of used spectacles at least approximately suited to their needs, they will certainly be more grateful than for almost any other gift they might receive.

Our suggestions, then, as to the disposal of your used spectacles are 1) if you have a St. Vincent de Paul society in your parish, or some other group designed to help the poor, inquire as to whether they are in a position to find users; 2) if there are no needy in your parish, or no special organizations set up to care for them, send your used spectacles to New Eyes for the Needy, Short Hills, New Jersey, where they will be distributed through reliable, charitable organizations, hospitals, and clinics to those in real need.

Hymn For Seekers

Protestants and not a few Catholics cannot understand why Cardinal Newman's hymn, "Lead, Kindly Light," is rarely introduced into the services of the Catholic Church. Here is the explanation very neatly put by Mother Mary Loyola in her excellent volume, "Home for Good."

A party of non-Catholics on pilgrimage to Fountains Abbey had been walking in procession among the ruins, singing "Lead, Kindly Light." One of them, coming upon a Catholic girl, asked:

"Why do you leave Newman's beautiful hymn to us? You never use it in your churches."

"We leave it," she answered pleasantly, "to those who need it, and unite our prayers with theirs that the 'Kindly Light' for which they ask so often and so fervently may lead them where it led Newman."

For Non-Catholics Only

Francis M. Louis

The Mis-use of Confession

Objection: I know some Catholics who go to confession fairly often, but they are far from living up to what their Church teaches. For instance, I have a Catholic friend who even says publicly that in confession he never mentions the fact that he is practicing contraception. What kind of a faith do you call that?

Response: I call it a very poor kind of faith, and the Catholic who acts and talks in that fashion throughout his life is actually worse off than if he had no faith at all. It is only natural that the sincere non-Catholic should be puzzled by instances such as this, but there are two considerations which should help such a one to see that they do not logically support a serious objection against the Catholic Church itself.

First, we have Christ's own word for it that not all His followers at all times would be saints. "It is necessary that scandals come," Christ said, by which surely He meant that, human nature being what it is, some would fall short of the ideal and even drag their faith maliciously through the mud and mire. If there was a Judas among the apostles, who were Our Lord's close associates, need we be surprised, even though we are saddened, that there are other Judases down through the years who, while they have the name of Catholic, give evidence by their lives of betraying that ancient and honorable name? Let the sincere non-Catholic pity such misguided persons rather than take scandal at them, remembering that Christ added: "Woe unto those by whom scandals come."

Secondly, the sincere non-Catholic should realize that the Catholic who deliberately conceals a serious sin in confession is not profiting in the least from his reception of the sacrament; in fact, he is adding a new sin to those which have gone before. Confession, in Catholic teaching, is not merely an automatic gesture. It requires in the very nature of things complete sincerity and honesty on the part of the penitent. If these are lacking, although the priest who hears the confession may be deceived, God is not deceived, and in such a case God simply withholds any forgiveness of sin from the one who makes a mockery of His established means of grace.

What has been said here should help the sincere non-Catholic to assess properly the true spiritual condition of the unworthy Catholic, and may even inspire him to exercise the charity of pointing out to such a one his blindness and hypocrisy.



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EXCERPTS FROM THE WRITINGS OF ST. ALPHONSUS

Selected and Edited by John Schaefer

MARTYRS OF JAPAN (Continued)

The religious zeal of Michael Fiemon, who lived in the harbor of Firando, was known to everyone. Because of it he and his whole family were condemned to death. So well had Michael and his wife, Ursula, brought up their children that no attempts to win them over could succeed. John, a thirteen-year-old son, was tormented for two whole days, but each time he was questioned his only reply was: "I wish to die a Christian." When some pagans begged the mother to entrust one of her little daughters to them, promising that they would take care of her, Ursula declared that for all the gold in the world she would never permit any of her children to pass into the hands of idolators.

When the day of their martyrdom finally arrived, Michael and Ursula, each leading one of their daughters by one hand and holding a lighted candle, the symbol of faith, in the other, proceeded to the place of execution. Arriving there, Ursula begged to be executed last, explaining:

"Before dying, I wish to see all my family in safety."

Her wish was granted. Michael was the first to be decapitated, his head being severed with one blow. Little Clara followed her father, but it was only after several blows that she was decapitated. Then John arose and asked his mother to arrange his hair, which because of its length, might offer an

obstacle to the executioner. The good mother embraced him, and raising his hair, fastened it upon his head. The boy then approached the executioner, and noticing that the latter was yet very young, exclaimed:

"It seems to me that you are afraid, and that you have never yet cut off a head; take care, and do your duty."

With this he fell upon his knees, joined his hands, and while invoking the names of Jesus and Mary, he courageously received the death-blow. After seeing her husband and two of her children die in this manner, Ursula cried out with tears in her eyes:

"Be Thou praised, O my God! for having rendered me worthy to be present at this sacrifice; now grant me the grace to have a share in their crown. I have no one left but this child. O my God! I offer it to Thee with me. Accept this last sacrifice."

After reciting this prayer, she pressed the little Magdalen to her bosom. One and the same blow severed the heads of both mother and daughter.

On August 25, 1624, five religious, a Dominican, three Franciscans and a Jesuit were taken from the prisons of Omura to be delivered to the flames. They were but lightly fastened to their stakes, so that upon finding themselves unbound they could easily escape and thus declare themselves apostates, or by voluntarily remaining in the flames, at least serve to amuse the people. The

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first to be burned was Brother Louis, a Franciscan and a native Japanese, who, upon finding himself loosened from his cords, walked through the flames, cast himself at the feet of the priests, kissed their hands, and then returned to his stake where he expired a few moments later.

Father Carvailho, the Jesuit, was the second to expire. The third, Father Sassandra, a Franciscan and also a native Japanese, seeing his cords burnt, wished to join his companions, but was prevented from doing so because his feet were already half consumed. He contented himself with saluting them from a distance and died immediately afterward. The remaining two, Fathers Vasquez and Sotelo, were put to a slow fire and expired only after three hours of torment.

On May 8th of the same year occurred the remarkable deaths of Leo Misaqui and his three sons. Leo had, at first, wavered in his faith, but finally entered into himself and called his oldest son, declaring that he now was resolved to die for Jesus Christ in order to expiate his fault. The young man felt himself too weak to imitate his father and retired to another country. The father then called his three other sons and asked them what was their intention. Each answered that he was ready to die for the faith.

They were all finally summoned by the governor, and though everything possible was done to shake their firmness, nothing succeeded, and they were condemned to death. On reaching the place of execution Leo addressed a few words of encouragement to his children. While he was yet speaking the son of the governor arrived and said that he wished to try the temper of his arms upon the bodies of the martyrs. For this reason they were executed in such an unusual

manner. Not only were their heads cut off, but by one blow of the sabre each had his head taken off together with the left shoulder.

Many other martyrs were put to death in a similar manner, but I refrain from speaking of them here lest the narrative become tiresome to the reader. I cannot, however, pass over in silence those whose history contains some particular circumstances. Such was the martyrdom of James Coici and of Caius, both of whom were burned for the faith at Omura in 1625.

James had been arrested for lodging a missionary. And when Caius learned that his friend was in prison, he went to visit him. The guards refused him admittance, but he forced his way through them. In punishment for this insolence, Caius, too, was held a prisoner and so severely punished that his face was black and blue. Caius refused to be set at liberty at the cost of ceasing to teach the Christian religion. Though the governor threatened to burn him alive, he persisted in his refusal. In fact, a short time afterwards, he and his friend, James, were condemned to death by fire.

Gayly the two friends walked to the place of execution, singing the litany of the saints. Upon their arrival they broke away from their guards and ran to embrace the stakes destined for them. They were then tied, and fire was set to the funeral pile. Caius knelt down in the middle of the flames and, while thanking God in a loud voice for having found him worthy to die as he had desired, he expired. James was also kneeling in the middle of the fire. When his cords had been consumed he arose as if he wished to speak to those present, but, his strength failing him, he again knelt and died while invoking the names of Jesus and Mary.

During this same year, 1625, a

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Christian woman named Susanna, a native of Facata, was summoned before the judge with her husband, Peter Cabioie. Both were fervent Christians and were accused of providing lodgings for the missionaries. Susanna took her little three-year-old daughter into her arms and begged that her name, too, be inscribed on the list of Christians. Five days later, when she was led away with the other prisoners, she took her husband by the hand and exclaimed:

"I believe that they are going to torture us. I am going away first, and I hope with the help of God to remain faithful. I expect of you a like firmness. Remember that this life is short, and that eternity is very long."

At first the judges tried to unsettle Susanna by threats. Unsuccessful in this, they then subjected her modesty to a severe test by stripping her of her garments. They moreover suspended her from a tree by her hair, and this in very cold weather. While she was courageously enduring all this, one of the judges noticed the little girl whom a servant was carrying in her arms, and asked to whom she belonged. In order to save the child, the servant replied that it was her own. But Susanna cried out:

"No, it is my child; look at the list where I have had her name inscribed."

Enraged, the judge ordered that the little innocent should also be stripped and tied to the feet of her mother. The cold made the child cry bitterly, but the mother offered to God this cruel torture, which lasted for eight whole hours. After this Susanna was obliged to wear an iron collar about her neck, and, fastened to a column, forced to serve in the kitchen like a slave for six months. Finally, she was condemned to death and conducted to Nagasaki with the other martyrs of

whom we are going to speak. During the journey her child was taken from her. This, for Susanna, proved to be the greatest torture of all.

After Susanna, another valiant woman named Monica, the wife of John Naisen, gave an example of heroism not the less wonderful. The governor ordered her to be disrobed, and then, in the presence of her husband, to be exposed to the insults of some dissolute young men. When her husband, though a fervent Christian, beheld this affront, he cried out to the governor:

"Impious man! Save the honor of my wife, and I will do all that the judge wishes me to do."

John, then, had the weakness to say that he denied the faith in order that the honor of his wife might be respected. Monica, however, remained firm. The governor commanded her to take in her hands some burning coals that she might feel the torture of fire with which he threatened her. As she was stretching out her hand the tyrant raised his sword to cut it off, but she did not withdraw it. He, however, set her at liberty with her husband, because of the words uttered by the latter.

Upon their return home, John felt such great remorse that he resolved to go in search of the governor. He was received kindly, but John said:

"Sir, I come to declare to you that I spoke against my conscience when I promised you that I would do what the judge should command. I have not denied the faith in my heart. I, therefore, protest that I am always a Christian, and I beg you to make this known to the judge."

After a conference with the judge, the governor sent John to prison. Here Monica visited him with her three young children, rejoicing with him at his repentance.

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The number of the condemned was eight: John Naisen, Monica, his wife, and little Louis, their son; Peter Cabbioie and Susanna, his wife; Mattyias Aragni, John Tanaca and Catherine, his wife. Tanaca was a poor laborer, advanced in years. They were informed that they were to proceed to Nagasaki to be executed there. Shortly afterward the saintly cortege set out. All were on horseback with the exception of little Louis, whom a soldier carried in his arms.

Arriving at the place of execution, the four men were led to their stakes at which they were to be burned. The women knelt in prayer near their husbands. Little Louis was no sooner placed upon the ground than he ran towards his mother, but Monica made

him leave her in order not to be disturbed in her prayers, and the child returned to the soldier. Upon seeing that Louis was frightened, John said to him:

"My son, take courage, do not fear; we are going to enter paradise."

The execution was begun with the beheading of the three women and little Louis. Then fire was set to the funeral pile. John Tanaca, seeing that his fetters were consumed, walked through the flames and went to kiss the hands of each of his companions. He then returned to his place, where he fell and expired. Finally, all having accomplished their sacrifice, they went to receive in heaven the palm they had merited. Their martyrdom occurred on July 2, 1625.

Last Will Of A Archbishop

The last will and testament of Archbishop Alexandre Vachon of Ottawa, Canada, was read in his Cathedral of Notre Dame after his funeral. He died suddenly at the Dallas airport last year but had penned in advance these words to his flock:

"My soul is in purgatory at this moment, and there it will remain until it has thoroughly satisfied for its faults and imperfections. . . . My soul suffers. It must be pure to go to heaven. It can do nothing for itself now, my dear spiritual children. Its future deliverance depends upon you! It cries to you from the depths of its suffering; have pity on me! You at least, my spiritual children, my brothers in the priesthood, my devoted friends, I beg you to pray at my tomb. Give my soul alms, a Mass celebrated or a Mass heard, or some sacrifice, a rosary, a prayer. In purgatory the soul is the friend of God and intercedes for the members of the Mystical Body who are on earth. My soul prays for you whom it has loved so tenderly. In heaven gratitude will prompt it to pray for those who have asked my deliverance."

The Heel of Mary

During a meeting of the Legion of Mary in the Philippines, the secretary suddenly stopped reading her weekly report, and going quickly to the full-length open window, crushed the head of a large snake with her heel. All present were astonished at her presence of mind and inquired how she knew just what to do in such an emergency. In reply she showed them the statue of the Blessed Virgin which always had a prominent place on the table during the Legion meetings.



BOOK LOVERS DEPARTMENT

Conducted by Thomas Tobin

CATHOLIC AUTHOR OF THE MONTH

Margaret Yeo, 1877-1941

Biographer of the Saints

I. Life

Margaret Routledge was born in Canterbury, England, in 1877. Her father, Charles Routledge, was inspector of schools and Honorary Canon of Canterbury Cathedral, and her mother, Dorothy Blomfield Routledge, was the daughter of the Anglican bishop of London. Until she was fourteen, private tutors educated her at home. Her education was completed at schools in Northhamptonshire and Lausanne. While at school in Switzerland, Margaret became interested in the Catholic Church and was reprimanded for sneaking off to Mass on Sundays. Her father gave her the book entitled, *Thirty-Nine Reasons Against Joining the Church of Rome*, but the reading of this book only strengthened her conviction that the Catholic Church was the true Church of Christ. But it was only in 1916, ten years after her marriage to Eric Yeo, a distinguished Irish barrister, that she entered the Church. The final decision was made only after she had made a pilgrimage to Lough Deary, the famous Irish holy island. Mrs. Yeo spent most of her life in Ireland until the death of her husband in 1929, and then lived her last years in England, where she died in 1941.

II. Writings:

Although not pressed to write by an economic reason, Mrs. Yeo early felt the de-

sire to express herself on paper. Before her conversion she published three volumes of short stories, but her real dedication to writing came after she embraced the faith. At first she wrote several novels: *Salt, King of Shadows*, *Wild Parsley*, *Uncertain Glory* and *Full Circle*. Her fiction background and study of the lives of the Saints led her to her true field, the biographies of the Saints. In rapid succession appeared four popular biographies. Her first book, *St. Francis Xavier*, brought her into prominence as a member of the new school of biographers who combined dramatic presentation with accurate portrayal of the historical facts. *The Greatest of the Borgias* and *Reformer, St. Charles Borromeo* brought further fame to Mrs. Yeo.

III. The Book:

A good sample of Margaret Yeo's work is found in *These Three Hearts*, her last book. The *Three Hearts* are St. Margaret Mary, Blessed Claude de la Colombiere and, of course, the Sacred Heart. In a narrative form she tells the story of the revelations of the Sacred Heart to St. Margaret Mary and of the role of the spiritual director of the Saint, Blessed Claude. Those who read *These Three Hearts* will have a better understanding of the devotion to the Sacred Heart.

NOVEMBER BOOK REVIEWS

AN EX-SEMINARIAN

Nothing is Quite Enough. By Gary Mac Eoin. 306 pp. New York, N. Y.: Henry Holt and Co. \$3.50.

Nothing is Quite Enough is an unusual book! It is unusual in its contents, the intimate life story of a student for the priesthood; it is unusual in the lack of bitterness toward the religious order and the Church that refused to allow him to reach the culmination of his years of study — ordination to the priesthood.

As a young man of eighteen Gary MacEoin began his spiritual formation as a novice in the Redemptorist congregation. He reveals with accuracy the details of the religious life and interprets with understanding the motives behind the spiritual training. After his profession he went on to the Irish house of higher studies where he continued his preparation for the priesthood. His comments and reflections on the philosophical and theological are, in general, accurate and sympathetic. But the whole course of his life was changed when his superiors told him a few days before the day of ordination that he had no vocation to the priesthood. Then began a struggle to remain in the congregation and finally his period of adjustment in the world he had left many years before.

This Redemptorist reviewer enjoyed the volume very much, as it brought back to him so many aspects of his own novitiate and seminary days. He, too, wonders about the refusal of the superiors to tell the author the reasons why he was rejected, as this refusal to reveal reasons is most unusual in the situation. But he wishes his former confrere Godspeed in his new life. *Nothing is Quite Enough* is a penetrating analysis of a soul's growth in the spiritual life under the influence of seminary training. Seminarians, priests, and lay people who are interested in the life of a student for the priesthood will find this book fascinating reading.

LUCILLE HASLEY

The Mouse Hunter. By Lucille Hasley. 242 pp. New York, N. Y.: Sheed and Ward. \$2.75.

A new book from the pen of Lucille Hasley is always refreshing as she has the knack of the personal essay. Catholic truths and Catholic foibles come to life under the stimulating Hasley treatment. With deft, light strokes she can prick the balloon of some of our Catholic pretensions.

The Mouse Hunter is her latest collection of essays together with five short stories. Several of her essays deal with her humorous experiences as a public speaker in which role she had more than her fair share of "shakeola adutum." The picture of Charlotte Mary Josephine, the valiant woman who doubles as Lucille's mother and the general guardian of her home, is a priceless one. *The Mouse Hunter*, the short story that gives the name to the book, introduces poor Father (Walter Mitty) Mackey in a hopeless struggle with the granite pillar of the parish, Mrs. Dalrymple.

Readers who met Lucille Hasley in her first book, *Reproachfully Yours*, will be delighted with her latest book. Lucille Hasley and Joe Breig are two of the best Catholic essayists in America today.

JOE BREIG

A Halo for Father. By Joseph A. Breig. 127 pp. Milwaukee, Wis.: Bruce Publishing Co. \$2.50.

"The dedicated father today is a hero, and if you ask why he faces his burdens so bravely, I can answer only because in him is the stuff of saints." With this introduction from Myles Connolly in his book, *Dan England and the Noonday Devil*, Joe Breig begins his praise of fathers who have been sadly neglected when the sympathy and understanding are passed around. With his light style Joe Breig can make the deepest truths come to life and as a father of five children he knows whereof

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he writes. The inherent dignity and the sacramental value of fatherhood are portrayed in these essays in the Breig manner. The chapter entitled "How to Love Your Wife" is excellent. As was noted in the review of Lucille Hasley's book, Joe Breig ranks with her as one of the best personal essayists in Catholic America.

ST. PAUL

Saint Paul: Apostle of Nations. By Daniel-

Rops. Translated by Rex Martin. 163 pp. Chicago, Ill.: Fides Publishers. \$2.75.

The long need for a good short life of St. Paul has been fulfilled in this work by the celebrated French author, Daniel-Rops. For many Catholics their only knowledge of St. Paul is the vague one gathered from listening to excerpts from his letters in the Sunday Epistles. Some of these excerpts are not clear to the distracted listener, but this biography by Daniel-Rops places the letters in their proper place in the life of St. Paul. With sound scholarship and unusual literary skill the author makes us feel that we know the apostle of the nations. The facts of his life as well as his personality and his spiritual destiny come alive in the pages of this biography. Without qualification we recommend *St. Paul: Apostle of Nations* as an excellent and popular study of the great apostle.

CHILDHOOD LAND

Save Us A Seat, Timmy. By Elsy Mahern. 155 pp. St. Meinard, Ind.: The Grail. \$2.00

Do you wish to see in print the story of your own home life with the children? Mrs. Elsy Mahern in picturing her own children has given every mother and father a glimpse of their own children. The Mahern children romp and play, get off cute sayings, do things not so cute; the older child interprets with unfailing accuracy the meaningless jargon of the baby. Elsy Mahern has a knack for detailing the humorous and serious incidents of family life in a pleasing manner. Madame Schuman-

Heink used to say that she could hit one note higher after each baby she had and Mrs. Mahern feels that she attains better skill and surely more material for her pen with every new baby. May she be blessed with an even dozen!

FIRST COMMUNION

Ten Eager Hearts. By a Sister of Notre Dame. 96 pp. St. Louis, Mo.: B. Herder Co. \$1.75.

True Stories for First Communicants. By a Sister of Notre Dame. Illustrated by Rosemary De Souza. St. Louis, Mo.: B. Herder Co. \$1.75.

These two books by a Sister of Notre Dame contain stories for children preparing for their first Holy Communion. *Ten Eager Hearts* retells in simple language the actual thanksgiving offered by ten children on their First Communion day. *True Stories for First Communicants* presents for the children the story of the First Communions of twelve children. Some of these are well known, such as St. Gerard, St. Tarcisus, St. Gemma Galgani and St. John Vianney. The author, who has spent many years in preparing young children for their great day, has given material that will prove helpful to sisters and priests.

OUR LADY'S JUGGLER

The Juggler of Our Lady. By R. O. Blechman. New York, N. Y.: Henry Holt and Company. \$2.50.

A young artist, R. O. Blechman, has given us his artistic version of the famous medieval legend about Cantalbert, the little juggler who offered his only gift to Mary, his juggling. In a series of very clever sketches the story, with some additions by the artist, hurries to its close before Our Lady's altar. This is an interesting book that can be finished in ten minutes, but will amuse and also edify the reader.

FIDES ALBUM

Confirmation. 32 pp. Chicago, Ill.: Fides

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Publishers. \$25.

The latest release in the popular Fides Albums on the sacraments is *Confirmation*. The illustrated copy deals with the descent of the Holy Ghost, the liturgy and meaning of confirmation, the blessing of the holy oils on Holy Thursday, foreign missionaries and the lay apostolate. The pictures and text are well chosen and the smaller size of the present album adds to its practical value. The laity should know all the Fides Albums so as to have a better understanding of the role of the sacraments in their lives.

PSYCHOLOGY OF PERSONALITY

Psychoanalysis and Personality. By Joseph Nuttin. Translated by George Lamb. 310 pp. New York, N.Y.: Sheed and Ward. \$4.00.

The psychoanalytic writings of Freud and his disciples have called forth an abundant literature both in attack and in defense of his theory. This present book by Father Joseph Nuttin, the prominent psychologist of the Catholic University of Louvain, has as its partial purpose the objective evalua-

tion of Freud. The first section of 150 pages does give a very impartial and scientific analysis and evaluation of the founder of psychoanalysis. The second and larger part is devoted to the development of dynamic theory of normal personality. This well written and technical book is not for the ordinary reader unless he intends to spend many hours of study in the text, but it is a book that will definitely benefit students of psychology.

INSTRUCTION

Catholic Truth Through the Keyhole. By Rev. John J. Jankaukas and Rev. John F. Fearon. Illustrated by Ralph Smith. 71 pp. Chicago, Ill.: Catholite.

Two Chicago priests have collaborated with illustrator Ralph Smith to bring to young readers the truths of the Catholic faith in comic strip form. A series of panel drawings with text are the means used to present realistically the truths of the catechism. The text and illustrations are both well done. The parent and teacher should find great use for this book in their work with young children. This reviewer will welcome the additional volumes in the series.

BEST SELLERS

A Moral Evaluation of Current Books, Published at the University of Scranton, Pa.

I. Suitable for general reading:

A Newman Symposium—*Yanitelli*
The Story of the "Romance"—*Rively*
An Anthology of Catholic Poets—*Leslie*
Manta—*Haas*
Home to Kentucky—*Crabb*
Westward the Sun—*Cotterell*
Iceworld—*Clement*
The Seventh Sense—*Roberts*
Lady With A Spear—*Clark*
Mickey the Angel—*Gillooly*
Socrates, the Man and His Thoughts—*Taylor*
The Swimming Pool—*Rinehart*
Immortal Wife—*Stone*
Signs of Life—*Louvel*
More Dennis the Menace—*Ketcham*
A Halo for Father—*Breig*

Islands in the Sky—*Clarke*
Battle on Mercury—*Van Linn*
The Secret Agent—*Conrad*

II. Suitable only for adults:

A. Because of advanced style and contents:
The Singer, Not the Song—*Lindop*
You Shall Know Them—*Vercors*
Russia: What Next—*Deutscher*
The House of Moreys—*Bentley*
Our Virgin Island—*White*
North From Malaya—*Douglas*
The Wise Bamboo—*Morris*
The Role of the Christian in the World of Peace—
Children of Wonder—*Tenn*
Jefferson Selleck—*Jonas*
The Foolish Immortals—*Gallico*
The Strange Case of Alger Hiss—*Jowitt*

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Beyond This Place—*Cronin*
 Ciano's Hidden Diary—1937-1938—
Ciano
 Call Me Lucky—*Crosby*
 The Best Detective Stories of the Year
 —*Cooke*
 Psychoanalysis and Personality—*Nuttin*
 God and the Unconscious—*White*
 The War of the Worlds—*Wells*
 The Iron Mistress—*Wellman*
 The Bridges at Toko-Ri—*Michener*
 A Multitude of Sins—*Molloy*
 Foreign Policy Without Fear—*Dean*
 Landscape of the Heart—*Rogers*
 Life of the Past—*Simpson*
 Explorations in Science—*Kaempffert*
 The Mountain: A Novel—*Troyat*
 Draw Near to Battle—*Wheelwright*
 The Cardboard Crown—*Boyd*
 The Best from Fantasy and Science
 Fiction—*Boucher*
 London Calling North Pole—*Giskes*
 Spring's Green Shadow—*Mackworth*
 The Black City—*Caulfield*
 The Bonanza Trail—*Wolle*
 Truth is Our Weapon—*Barrett*
 Time and Time Again—*Hilton*
 The Unconquered—*Williams*
 The Worldly Philosophers—*Heilbroner*
 The Innocent One—*Reach*
 The Youth Hostel Murders—*Carr*
 Portrait of a Marriage—*Buck*

B. Because of immoral incidents which do not, however, invalidate the book as a whole:

7½ Cents—*Bissell*
 Rogue's Yarn—*Jennings*
 Gus the Great—*Duncan*
 Affair of the Heart—*Long*
 The Dark Angel—*Waltari*
 The Wire God—*Willard*

The Babylonians—*Weinreb*
 A Bargain with God—*Sagave*
 The Corner Store—*Idell*
 Across the River and into the Trees—
Hemingway
 The Witching Hour—*Cody*
 The King's General—*DuMaurier*
 Touched with Fire—*Tebbel*
 White Hunter Black Heart—*Viertel*
 This Was My World—*St. John*
 Ring Around the Sun—*Simak*
 Hellflower—*Smith*
 The Ragged Ones—*Davis*
 Proud Citadel—*Smith*
 The Eagle and the Wind—*Stover*
 Too Late the Phalarope—*Paton*
 Childhood's End—*Clarke*
 My Life on Earth—*Heth*
 New Tales of Space and Time—*Healy*

III. Permissible for the discriminating reader:

Hotel Talleyrand—*Bonner*
 The Green Man—*Jameson*
 The Emperor's Lady—*Kenyon*
 An Essay on Man—*Cassirer*
 To the End of Time—The Best of Olaf
 Stapledon—*Davenport*
 Savage Play—*Colin*
 Anna Fitzalan—*Steen*

IV. Not recommended to any reader:

The Florentine—*Spinatelli*
 Few Are Chosen—*Ferraro*
 Corpus of Joe Bailey—*Hall*
 The Sparks Fly Upward—*Ronald*
 The Time of Indifference—*Moravia*
 Floodtide—*Yerby*
 Patrol—*Majdalany*
 Out from Eden—*Lincoln*
 The Man from Nazareth as He Was
 Seen by the People of His time—
Fosdick

The Liguorian Pamphlet Office offers its service in obtaining for readers any book, by any publishers, that they may desire to give as a Christmas present. Copies of the Bible, English Missals, prayer-books, make excellent presents, as well as books of biography, fiction and the science of spirituality. Order through The Liguorian Pamphlet Office, Liguori, Mo.



Lucid Intervals

The proprietor didn't know what to say. "Oh, I don't think you'd want a pup with a bad leg," he managed to tell her. "You need a pup that could play with you. But this one can't walk very well."

"I don't care," said the little girl. She pulled up one leg of her dungarees and showed her brace. "I don't walk so good either," she said.

On a bus two girls were overheard discussing the art of conversation. "Take 'I'll say' and 'I'll tell the world' away from some people," said one, "and you cut their conversation practically to zero."

To which her companion enthusiastically rejoined, "I hope to tell you! Ain't it the truth!"

At a rather lush soiree, held at a Dallas hotel, a daughter of the host was gushing loudly to a group: "Yes, Daddy has thousands and thousands of cattle, and ranches and ranches and quite a few — I don't know exactly how many — oil wells. Oh, I try not to spend too riotously, but after all, I was born with a silver spoon in my mouth."

Across the room a gray-haired easterner said to his companion: "I suppose it's the magnitude of the Lone Star State that makes its citizens so wasteful of space. One measly spoon! And when it's perfectly obvious the young lady's oral cavity would accommodate a whole set of silverware."

"There's nothing to be frightened about," soothed the director. "The lion won't hurt you. He's been brought up on milk."

"So was I," retorted the extra as he turned to leave, "but I eat meat now!"

The dude and the hillbilly were both in the Army and occupied adjoining bunks in the barracks. One day the dude inspected his toilet kit, looked sharply at his neighbor and said, "Did you take my toothpaste?"

"No, I didn't take no toothpaste," replied the hillbilly. "I don't need no toothpaste. My teeth ain't loose."

Fresh out of medical school, the young doctor opened his office in a small town out West and waited all the first day for his first patient. The person who finally walked in was a man covered all over with a purple rash.

The young practitioner riffled through the pages of his medical books but could find nothing even remotely resembling the disease.

"Did you ever have anything like this before?" he eventually asked the patient.

"Shore thing, doc. It plumb had me down six times last year."

"Well," diagnosed the young doctor, "you've plumb got it again."

Having advised her small daughter that at dancing school she shouldn't dance silently—that talking to her partner was part of social grace—a mother noticed at her next visit to the dancing class that every time the music began the same boy raced towards her daughter and grabbed her for his partner.

Somewhat pleased, but also somewhat startled, the mother asked her daughter on the way home why the same boy always picked her.

"Oh, you mean Frankie," said the girl. "I'm telling him a continued mystery story."

APOSTOLATES OF SECURITY

Besides publishing *The Liguorian* as a magazine of moral and spiritual guidance for all classes of people, the Redemptorist Fathers at Liguori also use the printed word to promote the spiritual and temporal welfare of tens of thousands of people through special devotions.

One of these is devotion to the Mother of God, promoted by the magazine called *Perpetual Help*. St. Alphonsus said that no true child of Mary can ever be lost. And Mary herself has repeatedly promised to assist her children in the needs of their lives here on earth. *Perpetual Help* is published at cost for \$1.00 a year. It will increase both the devotion and the rewards of all who read it.

The other is devotion to St. Gerard Majella, the widely acclaimed patron of mothers in danger, patron of workingmen, patron of a good confession. The bulletin of the League of St. Gerard provides its readers with an amazing record, through articles, pictures, and letters, of the extraordinary favors St. Gerard is constantly obtaining for mothers through pregnancy and childbirth, and for others who need his special help.

To receive the *Perpetual Help* magazine or the bulletin of the League of St. Gerard, write to

THE REDEMPTORIST FATHERS

Liguori, Missouri

Christmas is Friendship

The world has clung to the idea that Christmas is the feast of friendship. It is a time for greeting one's friends, in person and through the mail. It is a time for family reunions and friendly gatherings. It is a time for exchanging gifts in a spirit of true and unselfish love.

It all started with Christ giving Himself to the world, bridging the chasm between man and God, making love possible where there had been hate, giving all men promise and hope and peace, making charity the foundation of an everlasting kingdom.

As it started with Christ, Christmas should never be celebrated without Christ. Help your friends celebrate the true origin of Christmas—by sending them *The Liguorian* as a gift this year. It will bring them greater knowledge of Christ through a whole year, and that means it will make Christmas "merry" on earth, and the beginning of unending happiness with Him.

CHRISTMAS GIFT FORM

Please send *The Liguorian* as a Christmas gift, for one year

(\$2.00) _____ for three years (\$5.00) _____ to

Name _____

St. and No. _____

City _____ Zone _____ State _____

Please send gift card in early December signed _____

Name and address of donor _____
